



SMOKIES GUIDE



FUN RANGER-LED WALKS & TALKS—PGS 11-14

THE OFFICIAL NEWSPAPER OF GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK ~ LATE SUMMER 2015



PHOTO COURTESY CITY OF GATLINBURG

Families love Great Smoky Mountains National Park for its variety of hiking trails. To find other great national parks, visit www.nps.gov.

Head Out to “Find Your Park” this Year

Ninety-nine years ago the National Park Service was created to defend Yellowstone and other sites against wildlife poachers and artifact collectors who were hauling away pieces of our national parks and monuments by the wagon load. Today the same Service protects over 400 parks, seashores, historic sites, battlefields, trails, lakeshores, and other national treasures in such a way as to “leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

In preparation for the 100th birthday of the National Park Service, the agency is encouraging everyone to “Find Your Park.” Public lands belong to everyone, and this is the perfect opportunity to explore new places, whether they are historic sites,

forests, parkways, rivers, urban parks, or those “crown jewels” of the national park system like Grand Canyon, Mesa Verde, Everglades, Arches, Yosemite, Olympic, and Gettysburg.

You might be surprised how many beautiful places are preserved by the NPS, even in your own backyard. Here are just a few of the sites within 100 miles of the Smokies:

- Andrew Johnson National Historic Site
- Appalachian National Scenic Trail
- Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site
- Obed Wild & Scenic River.

FIND YOUR PARK



TURK'S CAP LILY

The bright orange blossoms of this exceptionally tall wildflower burst forth in August and September. It is most often seen at the higher elevations, especially at places like Clingmans Dome Road and along Thomas Divide Trail. An oversized member of the lily family, it can stand up to seven feet tall.



BILL LEA PHOTO



Mountain folk nicknamed red squirrels “Boomers” because they chatter loud and long whenever they feel their territory is being invaded.

Smokies’ “Boomer” Lives Up to its Name

If you have ever encountered a red squirrel (aka “Boomer”) in the Great Smoky Mountains, you have probably been scolded by a red squirrel in the Great Smoky Mountains. The red squirrel is a highly vocal animal as well as a very territorial one. Perched on a tree limb just beyond your reach, a red squirrel will chatter at you incessantly, determined to make you aware of your trespass on its territory.

With 100 species of native trees and nearly 800 square miles of verdant forest, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the perfect habitat for an arboreal species like the red squirrel. Almost everything a red squirrel needs can be found among the limbs and branches of a tree. Their preferred foods in this forest buffet include tree buds,

hickory nuts, beech nuts, acorns, insects, and seeds from the cones of pine, hemlock, spruce, and fir trees. Red squirrels satisfy their sweet tooth by gnawing into the branch of a sugar maple tree and licking the sap.

A mushroom dangling from a tree limb is a sure sign that a red squirrel has chosen that branch for mushroom storage. This unusual behavior is actually good for forest health because it spreads beneficial fungi.

Red squirrels are found mostly at the park’s mid and higher elevations, especially in the Canadian Zone spruce-fir forest. Unlike gray squirrels, red squirrels are a northern species that reaches the southern edge of their range just south of the Smokies in the highlands of South Carolina.

smokies trip planner

to order maps and guides: www.SmokiesInformation.org

smokies guide

Smokies Guide is produced five times per year by Great Smoky Mountains Association and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Publication dates are roughly as follows:

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Abrams Creek and Balsam Mountain campgrounds are open this year.

camping in the national park

The National Park Service maintains developed campgrounds at nine locations in the park. There are no showers or hookups other than circuits for special medical uses at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont.

Campsites at Elkmont, Smokemont, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Cades Cove may be reserved. For reservations call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance. Reservations are required at Cataloochee Campground. Other park campgrounds are first-come, first-serve.

Site occupancy is limited to six people and two vehicles (a trailer = 1 vehicle). The maximum stay is 14 days.

Special camping sites for large groups are available seasonally at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Cosby, Deep Creek, Elkmont, and Smokemont. Group sites must be reserved. Call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Group sites may be reserved up to one year in advance.

The list below shows number of sites, elevations, fees, approximate 2015 operation dates, and maximum RV lengths. **Dates are subject to change.** Visit www.nps.gov/grsm for current information.

ABRAMS CREEK 16 sites, elev. 1,125', \$14, open May 22-Oct. 13, 12' trailers
BALSAM MOUNTAIN 46 sites, elev. 5,310', \$14, open May 22-Oct. 13, 30' RVs
BIG CREEK 12 sites, elev. 1,700', \$14, open April 10-Oct. 31, tents only
CADES COVE 159 sites, elev. 1,807', \$17-\$20, open year-round, 35'-40' RVs
CATALOOCHEE 27 sites, elev. 2,610', \$20, open April 3-Oct. 31, **reservations required**, 31' RVs
COSBY 157 sites, elev. 2,459', \$14, April 10-Oct. 31, 25' RVs
DEEP CREEK 92 sites, elev. 1,800', \$17, open April 10-Oct. 31, 26' RVs
ELKMONT 220 sites, elev. 2,150', \$17-\$23, open March 13-Nov. 28, 32'-35' RVs
LOOK ROCK *Closed*
SMOKEMONT 142 sites, elev. 2,198', \$17-\$20, open year-round, 35'-40' RVs

accommodations

Le Conte Lodge (accessible by trail only) provides the only lodging in the park. Call (865) 429-5704.

For information on lodging outside the park:
Bryson City 1-800-867-9246
Cherokee 1-800-438-1601
Fontana 1-800-849-2258
Gatlinburg 1-800-267-7088
Maggie Valley 1-800-624-4431
Pigeon Forge 1-800-251-9100
Sevierville 1-888-766-5948
Townsend 1-800-525-6834

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 the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails. Dogs on these trails must be leashed.

facility rentals

The historic Appalachian Clubhouse and Spence Cabin at Elkmont are now accepting reservations for day-use rentals. Picnic pavillions are also available for \$10-\$20 per day at Collins Creek, Cosby, Deep Creek, Greenbrier, Metcalf Bottoms, and Twin Creeks. To make a reservation, call 1-877-444-6777 or visit www.recreation.gov.

special events

September 5 (1-3 p.m.)
Back Porch Music Jam at Oconaluftee Visitor Center

September 19
Mountain Life Festival at Oconaluftee Visitor Center

December 12
Festival of Christmas Past at Sugarlands Visitor Center

picnic areas

Please see pages 8-9 for locations of picnic areas. All picnic areas have charcoal grills for cooking.

visitor centers

August: Oconaluftee & Sugarlands: 8-7:30; Clingmans Dome: 10-6:30, Cades Cove: 9-7:30. September: Oconaluftee & Sugarlands: 8-6:30; Clingmans Dome: 10-6, Cades Cove: 9-6:30.

other services

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



Bicycle morning in Cades Cove

bicycling

Most park roads are too narrow and heavily traveled by automobiles for safe or enjoyable bicycling. However, Cades Cove Loop Road is an exception. This 11-mile, one-way, paved road provides bicyclists with excellent opportunities for viewing wildlife and historic sites.

Helmets are required for persons age 16 and under and are strongly recommended for all bicyclists.

From May 6-Sept. 23, on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from sunrise to 10:00 a.m., only bicycles and pedestrians are allowed on Cades Cove Loop Road. Bicycles may be rented at the Cades Cove Campground store.

park information

for additional information, visit www.nps.gov/grsm

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"

The above temperature and precipitation averages are based on data for the last 20 years. Temperatures are in degrees fahrenheit. An average of over 88" of precipitation falls on the higher elevations of the Smokies. On Mt. Le Conte, an average of 82.8" of snow falls per year.

horse riding

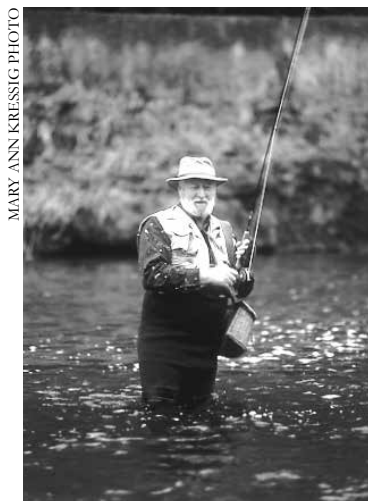
Horseback riding is generally available from early March through November. Rates are \$30 per hour. Most stables have maximum rider weight limits of 225 or 250 pounds and age restrictions for children. Please call the stables below or stop at a visitor center for detailed information.

Cades Cove (865) 448-9009
cadescovestables.com
 Smokemont (828) 497-2373
smokemontridingstables.com
 Smoky Mtn. (865) 436-5634
smokymountainridingstables.com

Sugarlands (865) 436-3535
sugarlandsridingstables.com

Hayrides and carriage rides (\$12 per person) are available from Cades Cove Riding Stable. Wagon rides (\$10 per person) are offered at Smokemont. Souvenir photos, tee-shirts, hats, and ice may be available. Soft drink vending is available.

The park service operates horse camps at Cades Cove, Big Creek, Cataloochee, and Round Bottom. Call 877-444-6777 or visit www.Recreation.gov for reservations.



Fishing for brook trout is now allowed in all park streams.

fishing

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

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

DRIVING DISTANCES & ESTIMATED TIMES

Cherokee, NC to:

Gatlinburg: 34 miles (1 hour)
 Cades Cove: 57 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 (2 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 (2¼ hours)



Primitive backcountry shelters like this one at Double Springs Gap are located along the Appalachian Trail and near the summit of Mt. Le Conte. Reservations are required for all campers in the backcountry.

Backcountry Camping in the Great Smokies

Camping at a backcountry campsite or shelter can be an exciting adventure for persons properly equipped and informed. To facilitate this activity, the National Park Service maintains over 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. Go online to view the park's official trail map (www.nps.gov/grsm/plan-yourvisit/maps.htm), which shows all park trails, campsites, and shelters. Park rules and regulations are also listed here. If you wish, you can purchase the printed version of the trail map for \$1 by stopping at any park visitor center or calling (865) 436-7318 x226 or shopping online at www.SmokiesInformation.org.
2. Call or stop by the park's backcountry office, which is open every day from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. The office is located in Sugarlands Visitor Center, two miles south of Gatlinburg on U.S. 441. (865)

436-1297.

3. Make your reservation through the backcountry office at Sugarlands Visitor Center (by phone or in person) or online at www.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.

Rangers will need to rescue over 100 people in the backcountry this year. If you don't want to be one of them:

- **Ditch the sandals.** Sturdy hiking boots are the best way to prevent a lower leg injury.
- **Know when the sun sets.** Many hikes turn into rescues because people get caught out on trails after dark without flashlights or headlamps.
- **Know your limits.** Don't plan a 15-mile hike unless you are in spectacular physical condition and have done such hikes in mountain terrain recently.
- **Prepare for the weather.** These mountains are so green because it rains a whole lot here. Always carry rain gear.

great sights to see

A dozen must-see places in the Great Smoky Mountains



KENT CAVE PHOTO

The observation tower atop the Smokies highest peak, 6,643'.

1. clingmans dome

A paved, but very steep, 0.5 mile trail leads to an observation tower that offers 360° views of the Great Smoky Mountains and beyond. To get there: turn off Newfound Gap Road 0.1 mile south of Newfound Gap and follow the 7-mile-long Clingmans Dome Road to the large parking area at the end. A visitor center is located along the trail to the tower.

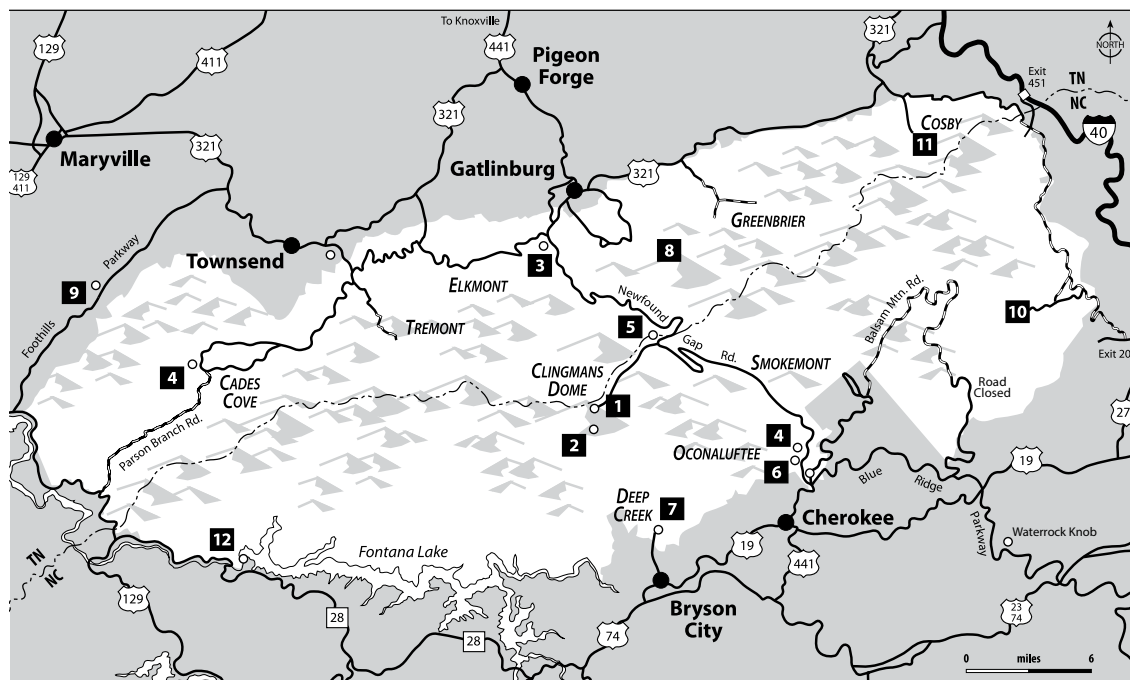
The road to Clingmans Dome is closed from December 1 through March 31 due to weather.

2. andrews bald

"Balds" are mountaintop meadows of mysterious origin. Andrews offers panoramic mountain views in favorable weather. The 3.6 mile roundtrip hike to Andrews Bald is along Forney Ridge Trail and starts from the end of Clingmans Dome parking area. The trail leads through high elevation spruce-fir forest with evergreen trees and unusual flora and fauna.

3. sugarlands visitor center

It's fun, it's free, and it's easy to find. Sugarlands Visitor Center is located 2 miles south



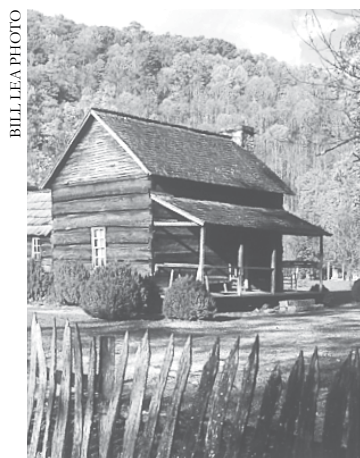
of Gatlinburg, TN on U.S. 441. Highlights include flora and fauna exhibits, a 20-minute film in the surround-sound theater, an information desk, and bookstore. Several short nature trails also begin at the center, as do ranger-led walks and talks. Open every day except Christmas.

4. water-powered grist mills

Two historic, water-powered grist mills operate from 9-5 daily, grinding corn into corn meal. Cable Mill sits in Cades Cove (halfway around the one-way loop road). Mingus Mill is 2 miles north of Cherokee, NC on U.S. 441 (Newfound Gap Road). Corn meal is available for purchase.

5. newfound gap

This gap is a low point in the mountain range and straddles the boundary of North Carolina and Tennessee. From here one can enjoy spectacular views into both states and take a short stroll along the famous Appalachian Trail. There are also restrooms and the historic Rockefeller Memorial.



BILL LEA PHOTO

The Davis-Queen house at the Mountain Farm Museum.

6. oconaluftee museums

This history buff's paradise now offers free indoor and outdoor museums. It also features old-time breeds of livestock (seasonally) and an heirloom garden and row crops. The new visitor center and mountain farm museum are located on U.S. 441 (Newfound Gap Road), 2 miles north of Cherokee, NC. Open every day except Christmas.

7. deep creek waterfalls

The Deep Creek area features a campground, picnic area, mountain stream, and miles of hiking trails. Around 2 miles of walking will acquaint you with beautiful Deep Creek and three pretty waterfalls (June Whank, Tom Branch, and Indian Creek). The trails to the waterfalls start from the large parking area at the end of Deep Creek Road (across the creek from Deep Creek Campground). The area is located about 3 miles from downtown Bryson City, NC.

8. Mt. Le Conte

The Alum Cave Trail to Mt. Le Conte and LeConte Lodge will be closed Mondays-Thursdays for trail repairs much of this summer and fall. However, there are plenty of alternatives for hikers to this popular peak. The Boulevard Trail starts from Newfound Gap and runs 8.1 miles to LeConte Lodge. Bull Head and Rainbow Falls trails begin from Cherokee Orchard (near downtown Gatlinburg) and are 6.9 and 6.7 miles respectively. From the Greenbrier area, Brushy Mountain and Trillium Gap trails lead 9.1 miles to the summit.

WHERE TO BEAT THE CROWDS

If you want to beat the summer crowds, try some of these off-the-beaten-path destinations.

9. Look Rock walking trail and tower. Great views, just off the Foothills Parkway West, 18 miles from Townsend, TN.

10. Cataloochee Valley. This remote area is accessible only by narrow, winding secondary roads. But when you arrive, there are elk to watch, historic buildings to explore, and plenty of trails to walk. 39 miles from Cherokee; 65 miles from Gatlinburg.

11. Cosby Campground, Picnic Area, and hiking trails. The campground rarely fills, and there are short and long trails to waterfalls, views, and Mt. Cammerer fire tower. The campground is 20 miles from Gatlinburg, TN.

12. Fontana Dam and Lake. A TVA visitor center and tours highlight the highest dam in the East. Fontana Marina offers boat rentals and shuttles for access to remote, historic areas of the park like Hazel Creek and Eagle Creek.

park news

Great Smoky Mountains National Park protects over 800 square miles of land

National Park Service News Briefs

Researcher Studies Impact of Sounds

IS PEACE AND QUIET as important to national park visitors as clean water and clear air? Are the sounds of singing birds, bugling elk, and rushing mountain streams part of your memorable park experience? Researcher Scott McFarland will be in the Smokies this summer monitoring some of the noisiest and quietest areas of our park. His data will help park officials shape future management actions with the value of natural sounds and quiet in mind. To learn more, visit www.nature.nps.gov/sound/

Alum Cave Trail Closed Mondays-Thursdays

THE VERY POPULAR Alum Cave Trail to Alum Cave Bluffs and Mt. Le Conte will be closed from Monday mornings through Thursday evenings (excluding federal holidays) through November 19 this year. Work will then resume on a similar schedule next year. The closure will allow volunteers and the park's Trails Forever Crew to repair portions of the pathway damaged by landslides and washouts. The five-mile long trail will remain open Fridays-Sundays throughout the year. Alternative trails to Mt. Le Conte include The Boulevard, Brushy Mountain, Trillium Gap, Rainbow Falls, and Bull Head.

Park Adds \$806 Million to Local Economy

A NEW REPORT SHOWS THAT 10,099,276 VISITORS to Great Smoky Mountains National Park in 2014 spent \$806,719,900 in communities near the park. That spending supported 12,759 jobs in the local area.

"After a record setting year in 2014, we are pleased Great Smoky Mountains National Park continues to provide not only an incredible resource for visitors to explore and enjoy, but also serves as a driving economic force in the local community," said Superintendent Cassius Cash. For more information: www.nature.nps.gov/socialscience/economics.cfm

Electric Vehicle Charging Stations Coming

LATER THIS YEAR, the Smokies will be the first national park in the country to offer DC fast charging stations for electric vehicles. Thanks to a grant from the Department of Energy, partnerships with the Clean Cities groups, and a donation from Nissan, the park will have charging stations at Sugarlands and Oconaluftee visitor centers for the public to quickly recharge their electric cars. For more information, visit www.nps.gov/grsm.

New Firewood Regulation Will Help Protect Forests from Alien Invaders



BILL LEA PHOTO

Campers can collect dead and down wood in the park or purchase certified firewood at the larger campgrounds or stores outside the park.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials have enacted regulations that will help protect park forests by restricting the type of firewood brought into the park. Beginning this spring, only heat-treated firewood that is bundled and displays a certification stamp by the USDA or a state department of agriculture will be allowed in park campgrounds.

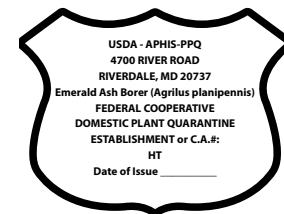
Heat-treated firewood is now for sale from concessioners in many of the park campgrounds as well as from private businesses in the communities around the park. Certified heat-treated firewood is packaged in 0.75 cu-ft. bundles clearly displaying a certification stamp.

The wood is a high-quality hardwood product that has been heated for 60 minutes at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. The wood lights easily, burns well for campfires, is safe to cook over, and is already available at over 85 locations near the park that can be viewed on an interactive map at www.nature.org/firewoodmap. In

addition, visitors may still collect dead and down wood in the park for campfires.

"The threat of these new pests coming into our forests, both in the park and regionally, compels us to do all we can to reduce the risk to our forests," said Deputy Superintendent Clayton Jordan. "While a ban on the

to devastate over 40 species of hardwood trees native to the park. New infestations threaten our forests with widespread tree mortality that could degrade wildlife



habitat, biodiversity, and scenic views. Using firewood that has been heat treated eliminates the threat.

National parks throughout the Appalachian region have taken action to limit the spread of insect pests in firewood, including the banning of imported firewood. For the past three years the Smokies has prohibited the importation of firewood from areas quarantined by the USDA Inspection Service.

Park rangers have been working over the past year with numerous partner organizations to mitigate the

These insects from Asia and Europe have the potential to devastate over 40 species of hardwood trees native to the Smokies.

importation of non-treated firewood will not entirely halt the spread of forest pests and diseases, it will greatly slow it down. This allows us time to develop and implement new treatment strategies."

Non-native, tree-killing insects and diseases can unknowingly be introduced through firewood transported from infested areas. A variety of destructive pests lay eggs or stowaway in firewood. These insects from Asia and Europe have the potential

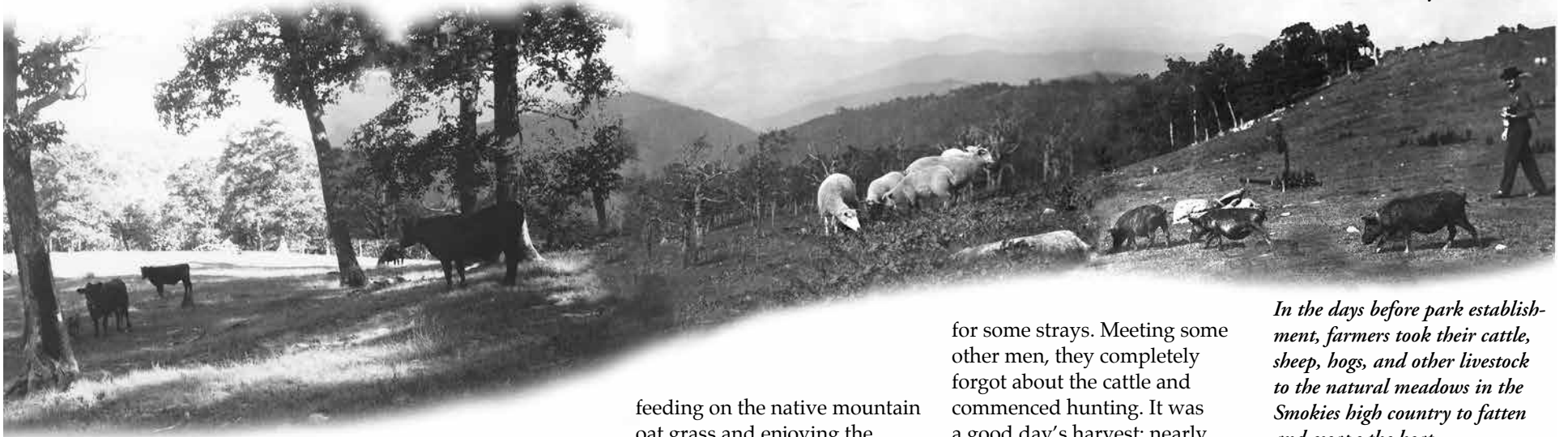
risks associated with movement of firewood, including a public education campaign with campground programs and billboards. The park also hosted public meetings and developed an informational handout that was provided to all Smokies campers inviting public comments.

For more information about firewood and forest and pests in the park, please visit the park website at <http://www.nps.gov/grsm/plan-yourvisit/firewood-alert.htm>.

smokies history

“When Summer’s in the Meadow” Grazing livestock on the Grassy Balds

by Rose Houk



For at least a century before the Great Smokies became a national park, livestock were driven up onto the grassy balds every summer to fatten on the flavorful forage. Herders kept watch over cattle, sheep, hogs, and a few horses and mules, and in the fall they rounded up all the animals and brought them down to market.

This tradition of grazing goes back at least to the early 1800s, and possibly even earlier. Native Americans may have grazed animals on the balds—historians say the Cherokee held communal grazing lands, and leased pastures to farmers to range their cattle as well. And it’s certain that the earliest white settlers saw the value of that grazing land and put it to use. With their Scotch-Irish heritage, they found it fairly easy to adapt their old-country, upland grazing methods to the new environment of the Smokies. Because of the large number of livestock sent to the highlands, places like Spence Field, Andrews Bald, and Gregory Bald were kept grassy and free of trees.

Grazing livestock in the high

country was a seasonal ritual. Come April or early May, word rippled through surrounding towns and valleys that it was time to ready the livestock for their journey. To tell one owner’s animals from another, they nipped distinctive notches or impressed tattoos into the ears. Most of the cattle and sheep also had bells around their necks. As many as 50 families mingled their livestock for the long migration. By the time all were assembled, there would be several hundred head of cattle—steers, heifers, cows, some blackface, whiteface, and good old mountain mixed-breeds. Add in sheep, hogs, horses and mules—and the usual noisy entourage of barking dogs and shouting and whistling drovers—and it was quite the procession.

Herds headed for Spence and Russell fields went up to the crest by way of the Bote Mountain Road. Those bound for Gregory or Parson took the Cooper and Rich Mountain roads into Cades Cove, and continued along Forge Creek or the Fork Ridge Trail. After reaching the top, the animals were let loose to wander at will,

feeding on the native mountain oat grass and enjoying the pleasant breezes and lack of bugs at 5,000 feet elevation. It was heaven on earth for a cow.

Men hired on as herders and charged a nominal sum per head. Dan Myers, Fonze Cable, Granville Calhoun, George Tipton, and Tom Sparks were among the best-known. Some herders went back and forth to the balds to tend the animals, while others lived up there all summer in cabins they built beside springs. Spence Cabin and Hall Cabin were notable. All these structures are gone now, but photographs show them as small log cabins of one or two rooms, with a fireplace and simple furnishings. The herder would keep a loyal dog, and maybe a cat, for company. They had a few visitors too, as hunters and hikers stopped in along the way.

Some herders cleared a garden patch and grew potatoes and cabbage to supplement the standard fare of cornbread, fatback, and beans. And nearly every one of them hunted wild game, to vary the monotonous diet and probably to help pass the long hours. One nice fall day, Granville Calhoun and his father-in-law, Crate Hall, went out searching

for some strays. Meeting some other men, they completely forgot about the cattle and commenced hunting. It was a good day’s harvest: nearly a dozen wild turkey, a buck deer, one bear, a groundhog, raccoons, several squirrels, and a grouse.

Seymour Calhoun helped his father herd. They ran their own cattle and those of others at the same time, he said, “anywhere from five to seven or eight hundred head” from Clingmans Dome west for about 16 miles to Spence Field.

Lightning was a real threat to animals standing out on the open balds. Randolph Shields said his family received word that lightning had killed most of their sheep at Ekaneetlee Gap. His grandmother took everyone up, and they pulled the wool off the carcasses because it was too valuable to waste.

Bears could be a problem, mostly for calves and sheep, but in pre-park days the bear population was much sparser than it is today. If a herder did hear of a marauding bear, though, he’d form a hunting party and go get it.

Poisonous plants, especially mountain laurel, or “ivy,” were to be avoided. The cattle wore muzzles of leather bark, or wire to prevent their nibbling laurel along the trail. “It’d kill them” if they ate it, said Uncle Jim

In the days before park establishment, farmers took their cattle, sheep, hogs, and other livestock to the natural meadows in the Smokies high country to fatten and escape the heat.

Shelton, who started herding as a teenager with Granville Calhoun.

Come the first of September, it was time for “the gathering” or roundup—all the cattle and sheep had to be collected, counted, separated according to ownership, and readied for the trip back down the mountains. This was the only count that was done, said Asa Sparks, but it was an important one because this was when the herder discovered if any animals in his charge were lost or missing. If any were unaccounted for, he had to go find them. Randolph Shields said he and Kermit Caughron combed the thick-wooded hollows of the Twenty-Mile area for three days just to find three missing cows.

But by the 1930s, people had begun to place a different value on the Great Smoky Mountains. The range was about to become a new national park. Grazing, and other uses considered incompatible with the park, would no longer be allowed. The last holdout was John Oliver, who took some of his cattle up on the balds above Cades Cove for the last time in 1936.

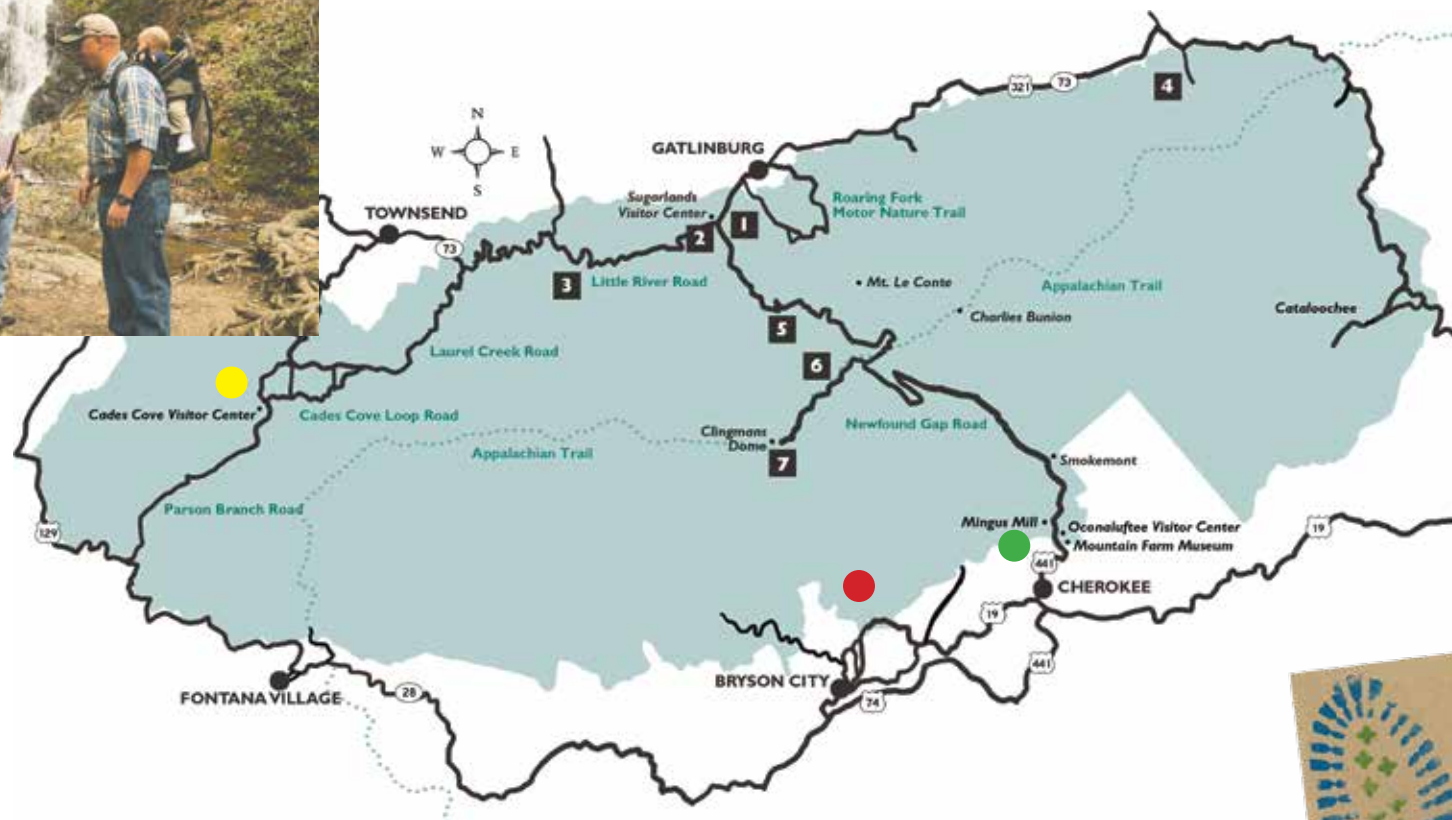
hit the trail

Day hiking in the Smokies is a fun way for families to escape the car and enjoy the great outdoors



DAVID LUTTRELL PHOTO

Great Hikes for Families



- 1** Sugarlands Valley Nature Trail (0.5 mile)
- 2** Fighting Creek Nature Trail (1.0 mile)
- 3** Elkmont Nature Trail (0.8 mile)
- 4** Cosby Nature Trail (0.75 mile)
- 5** Cove Hardwood Nature Trail (0.75 mile)
- 6** Spruce-fir Nature Trail (0.5 mile)
- 7** Clingmans Dome Trail (1.0 mile)

With over 800 miles of gorgeous hiking trails to choose from, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a wonderland for families who want to escape from the car and busy roadways and experience the peace and beauty of the Smokies. Hiking is not only great for your health, it gives families the opportunity for bonding and shared adventures that will be remembered for a lifetime.

Perhaps the best way for families with younger children to hike the Smokies is on one of the park's self-guiding nature trails shown on the map above. Each offers an inexpensive brochure and numbered posts that help you learn about some of the things you see along the way. Many are loop trails. Mileages shown are round trip.

Quiet Walkways are another great way to stretch your legs and enjoy the Smokies backcountry. Look for signs along park roadways to find these short gems. A few are loop trails, but most are not, so you just walk a ways, then return the way you came.

Other family favorite day hikes include:

● **The Three Waterfalls Loop.** Starting at the trailhead past Deep Creek Campground and Picnic areas, this 2.4 mile moderate loop hike includes three impressive waterfalls you can enjoy and photograph.

● **Abrams Falls.** Beginning from the Cades Cove Loop Road, this 5 mile roundtrip moderate hike climbs up and down over ridges to reach beautiful Abrams Falls.

● **Oconaluftee River Trail.** This easy, 3-mile roundtrip hike starts at Oconaluftee Visitor Center and follows the river into the town of Cherokee. Exhibit signs along the way tell Cherokee Indian stories.

Get Your Kids Hiking!

This summer, family hiking expert and author of *Get Your Kids Hiking*, Jeff Alt, teams up with Great Smoky Mountains National Park rangers to lead kids and accompanying adults on a short hike loaded with hands-on family hiking tips and ways to explore the outdoors. Learn how a few simple techniques and some basic equipment can turn any walk in the woods into a safe, fun-filled adventure. Come prepared for a 1 hour easy walk (less than one mile). Programs are open to children of all ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult/caregiver.

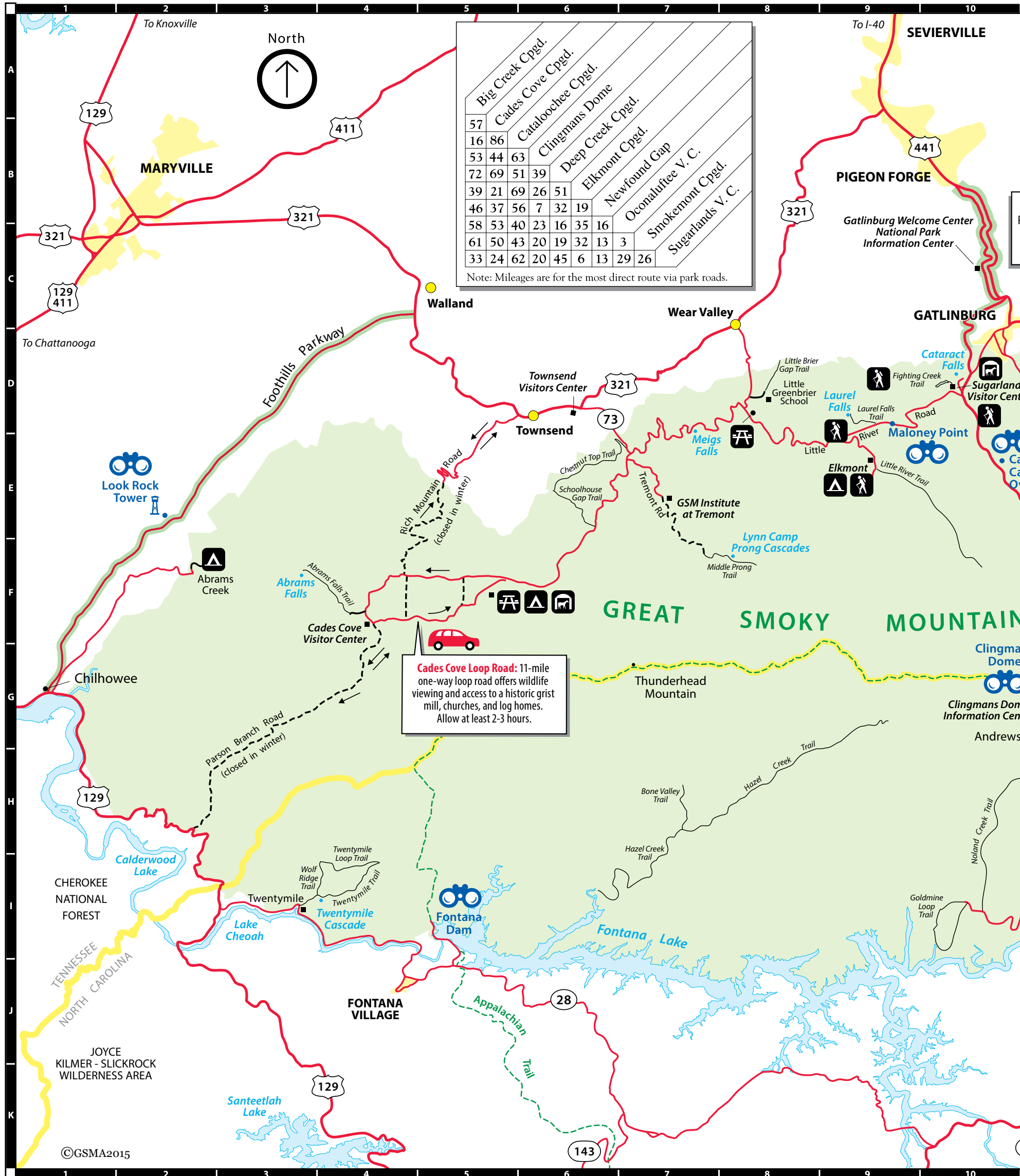
- Saturday, June 20, 10:30 a.m., Location: Sugarlands Visitor Center
- Saturday, July 18, 11:00 a.m. Location: Oconaluftee Visitor Center
- Saturday, October 10, 10:30 a.m. Location: Sugarlands Visitor Center

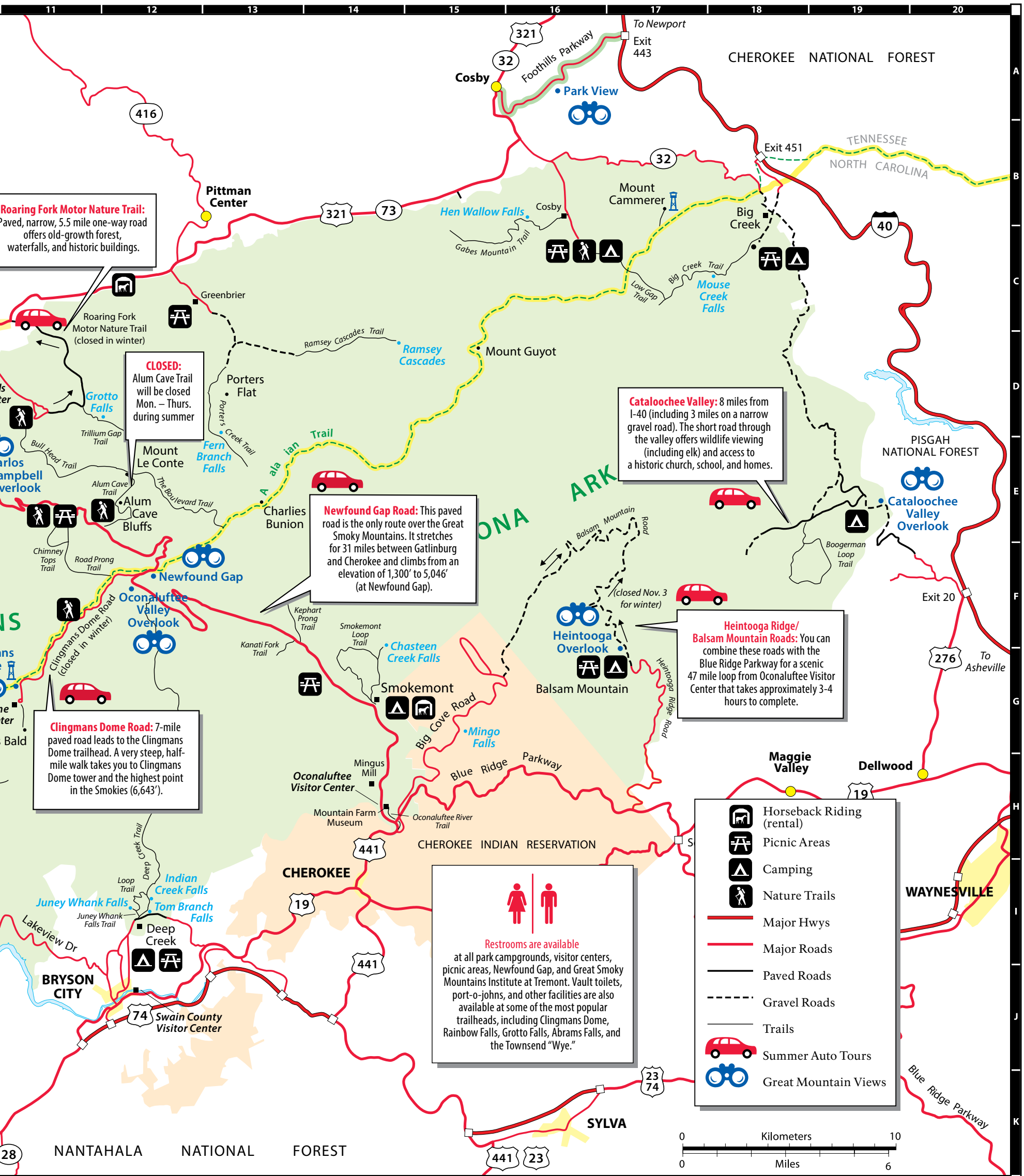


Don't forget to pick up a **Hike the Smokies—FOR FAMILIES** log book to keep track of your hikes and earn cool stickers and pins for the miles you cover. Available for \$1 at park visitor centers.

Scavenger Hike Adventures are 13 hikes especially for families who want to engage their kids in searching for clues and hidden wonders as they walk park trails. Your kids will look for such treasures as a wrecked steam engine, a tree marked by bear claws, remains of an old Model T, and historic log cabins. Available at park visitor centers or by visiting www.SmokiesInformation.org.

GREAT SUMMER DRIVING TOURS AND VIEWS IN THE SMOKIES





Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail: Paved, narrow, 5.5 mile one-way road offers old-growth forest, waterfalls, and historic buildings.

CLOSED: Alum Cave Trail will be closed Mon. - Thurs. during summer

Newfound Gap Road: This paved road is the only route over the Great Smoky Mountains. It stretches for 31 miles between Gatlinburg and Cherokee and climbs from an elevation of 1,300' to 5,046' (at Newfound Gap).

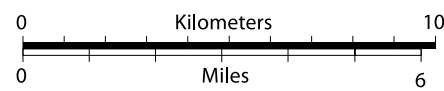
Cataloochee Valley: 8 miles from I-40 (including 3 miles on a narrow gravel road). The short road through the valley offers wildlife viewing (including elk) and access to a historic church, school, and homes.

Heintooga Ridge/ Balsam Mountain Roads: You can combine these roads with the Blue Ridge Parkway for a scenic 47 mile loop from Oconaluftee Visitor Center that takes approximately 3-4 hours to complete.

Clingmans Dome Road: 7-mile paved road leads to the Clingmans Dome trailhead. A very steep, half-mile walk takes you to Clingmans Dome tower and the highest point in the Smokies (6,643').

Restrooms are available at all park campgrounds, visitor centers, picnic areas, Newfound Gap, and Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. Vault toilets, port-o-johns, and other facilities are also available at some of the most popular trailheads, including Clingmans Dome, Rainbow Falls, Grotto Falls, Abrams Falls, and the Townsend "Wye."

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



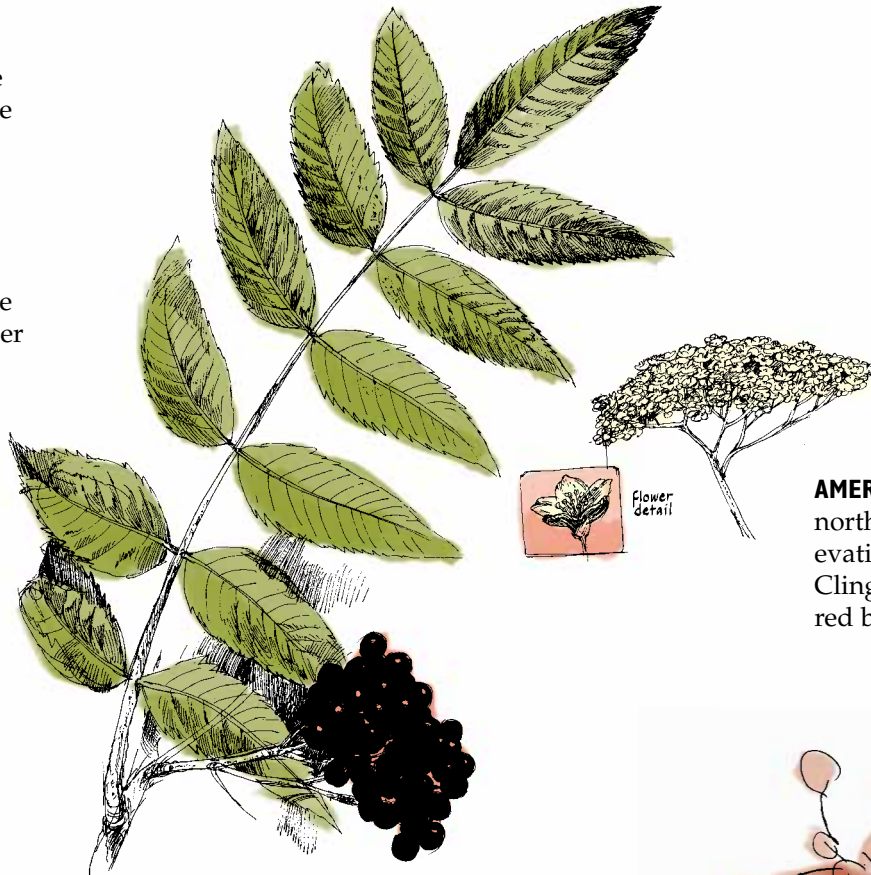


summer into fall

The transition from late summer into fall is a busy time in nature.



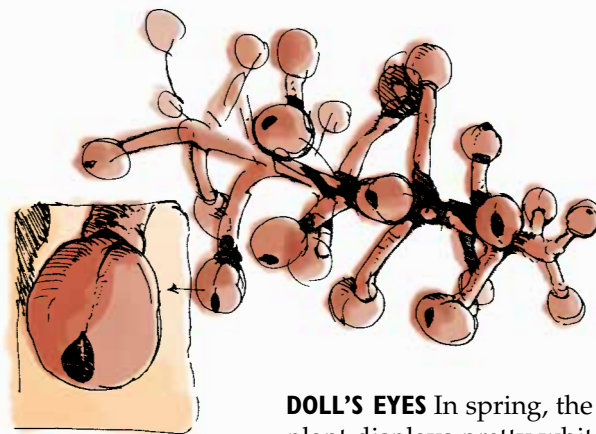
MONARCH BUTTERFLY These bright orange butterflies are often seen in late summer, especially near meadows in places like Cades Cove. Because monarch caterpillars eat noxious milkweed plants, their adult forms are distasteful to birds and other would-be predators.



AMERICAN MOUNTAIN ASH This small tree is a northern species that is found at the highest elevations in the park. It is quite common around Clingmans Dome. During fall it sports bright red berries that bears and songbirds like to eat.



CHIPMUNKS These small mammals seem to be everywhere in fall. You have probably heard their warning "Chip!" when you hike past a boulder field. They store berries, seeds, nuts, and other foods in a variety of places: in hollow logs, under rocks, and in burrows.



DOLL'S EYES In spring, the white baneberry plant displays pretty white flowers. In fall, these flowers become glossy white fruits with purplish dots. Some people think the fruits resemble the eyes of an old-fashioned doll.

things to do

Programs and activities in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

AUGUST 9 – SEPTEMBER 12, 2015

Park visitor centers are located at Cades Cove, Oconaluftee, Clingmans Dome, and Sugarlands. All offer information, exhibits, and publications related to the park and its resources.

♿ Accessible to persons using wheelchairs.

👨‍👩‍👧 Families who hike in the Smokies can now earn special stickers and collector pins as rewards. Pick up a “Hike the Smokies—For Families” booklet at any park visitor center to learn more.



CADES COVE

Because of slow moving traffic it may take over an hour to drive the six miles from the start of Cades Cove Loop Road to programs at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill Historic Area.

Sundays

Junior Ranger Program: Work & Play

Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area half way around the Loop Road

1:00 p.m.

Experience what it was like to work on a farm and work as a family to get chores done.

Duration: 1 hour

Difficulty: Easy



WILD by Design

Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area half way around the Loop Road

2:30 p.m.

A talk and hands-on demonstration about the wild things in the park.

Duration: 30 minutes

Difficulty: Easy



Mondays

Mill Tour

Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area half way around the Loop Road

11:30 a.m. & 12:30 a.m.

Join a ranger for a walk around the historic structures at this site and learn about their function in the Cades Cove community.

Duration: 30 minutes

Difficulty: Easy



Nearly all ranger-guided programs are free of charge.

Tuesdays

Cades Cove Evening Hayride

Meet at Cades Cove Riding Stables

4:30 p.m.

Join a ranger for an evening open air hayride viewing wildlife and discovering the diversity of life in the Cove. Hayrides can fill up quickly, first-come, first-serve for this program.

Duration: 2 hours

Fee: \$14.00/person



Saturdays

Junior Ranger: Explore Cades Cove

Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area, halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road

1:00 p.m.

This interactive fun program will cover wildlife, history, or other things that make Cades Cove awesome.

Duration: 45 minutes

Difficulty: Easy



WILD by Design

Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center area half way around the Cades Cove Loop Road

2:30 p.m.

A talk and hands-on demonstration about the wild

things in the park.

Duration: 30 minutes

Difficulty: Easy



GATLINBURG/ SUGARLANDS AREA

Daily

Cataract Falls

Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center

11:30 a.m.

Join a ranger on a short walk to discover why the Smokies is special in the summer. Topics may include waterfalls, wildflowers, trees, history, salamanders, and birds.

Duration: 1 hour

Difficulty: Easy

Sundays

Junior Ranger: Bear-mania!

Sugarlands Visitor Center

2:00 p.m.

So you think you know a lot about bears, huh? Well join a ranger to test your knowledge and learn more about this “symbol of the Smokies.”

Duration: 45 minutes



SPECIAL PROGRAMS

Cades Cove Full Moon Hike

Meet at the Orientation Shelter at the entrance to the Cades Cove Loop Road

8:00 p.m. Saturday, August 29

Wear comfortable walking shoes. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

Duration: 2 hours

Difficulty: Easy, 2 mile walk



Back Porch Old-Time Music Jam

Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. August 15, September 5 & 19

Bring an acoustic instrument and join in on this old-time jam. Or just sit back and enjoy the sights and sounds as others play traditional Appalachian music.



Mountain Life Festival

Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to Oconaluftee Visitor Center

10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Saturday, September 19

Join park staff and volunteers as we celebrate the fall harvest. The Mountain Farm Museum will be alive with history as demonstrators provide visitors with a glimpse into the past as they make soap, apple cider, sorghum molasses, hominy, music and more.

Mondays

A Wondrous Diversity of Life

Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center

2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you're sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

Duration: 45 minutes



Wednesdays

A Wondrous Diversity of Life

Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center

2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you're sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

Duration: 45 minutes



Fridays

A Wondrous Diversity of Life

Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center

2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you're sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

Duration: 45 minutes



Saturdays

Junior Ranger: Bear-mania!

Sugarlands Visitor Center

2:00 p.m.

So you think you know a lot about bears, huh? Well join a ranger to test your knowledge and learn more about this "symbol of the Smokies."

Duration: 45 minutes



ELKMONT/LITTLE GREENBRIER/METCALF BOTTOMS AREA

Tuesdays

Junior Ranger: School Days at Little Greenbrier

Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse

11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.

Go back in time to discover what it was like to live in a mountain community and go to school in a one-room schoolhouse. Fun for all ages, and great for Junior Rangers. Please arrive 15 minutes before program start; space is limited.

Duration: 1 hour

Level: Easy

CLINGMANS DOME/ NEWFOUND GAP AREA

Mondays

Islands in the Sky

Viewing Area below Clingmans Dome Visitor Center

1:00 p.m.

The high elevation forest of the Smokies is one of the most interesting and endangered ecosystems in the Eastern U.S. Come learn more about what makes this beautiful area unique.

Duration: 45 minutes



Tuesdays

Islands in the Sky

Viewing Area below Clingmans Dome Visitor Center

1:00 p.m.

The high elevation forest of the Smokies is one of the most interesting and endangered ecosystems in the Eastern U.S. Come learn more about what makes this beautiful area unique.

Duration: 45 minutes



Kids 5 - 12:
Become a Junior Ranger!
Purchase a booklet at any park visitor center.
Earn a free badge.

Anyone between the ages 13-130
can now become a

[NOT-SO-JUNIOR] RANGER



Pick up your card today
at Sugarlands, Clingmans
Dome, Oconaluftee, or
Cades Cove visitor centers!
Earn a very cool patch.

Wednesdays

Islands in the Sky

Viewing Area below Clingmans Dome Visitor Center

1:00 p.m.

The high elevation forest of the Smokies is one of the most interesting and endangered ecosystems in the Eastern U.S. Come learn more about what makes this beautiful area unique.

Duration: 45 minutes



Thursdays

On Top of Old Smoky

Clingmans Dome Visitor Center

10:00 a.m.

Join a Ranger on a hike to the highest peak in the park to take in 360° views and learn about the unique Canadian Zone environment. Discover some of the park's most influential people, or hear stories behind the park's place names. Topics vary, but you're sure to be inspired by the stories behind the scenery.

Duration: 1.5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

Saturdays

On Top of Old Smoky

Clingmans Dome Visitor Center

10:00 a.m.

Join a Ranger on a hike to the highest peak in the park to take in 360° views and learn about the unique Canadian Zone environment. Discover some of the park's most influential people, or hear stories behind the park's place names. Topics vary, but you're sure to be inspired by the stories behind the scenery.

Duration: 1.5 hours

Difficulty: Moderate

OCONALUFTEE/ SMOKEMONT AREA

Daily

Mingus Mill Demonstration

Located a half-mile north of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center on US 441 (Newfound Gap Road)

9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

Chat with a miller and feel the rumble of this historic gristmill in action.



Mountain Farm Museum

Adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center

Dawn to Dusk

Walk down to the farm for a glimpse into the past. Self-guiding brochures and audio tours are always available and some days you may find demonstrations such as blacksmithing, hearth cooking, or gardening taking place.



Sundays

Old Time Mountain Religion

Smokemont Baptist Church (near Smokemont Campground entrance)

11:00 a.m. (except August 9 & September 6)

Join a Ranger and discover how old-time mountain religion met spiritual, social, and community needs.

Duration: 45 minutes

Cherokee Culture

Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch Area

1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m. (except September 6)

Join Cherokee friends to learn about Cherokee culture and history through demonstrations and storytelling.

Duration: 2 hours

Mondays

Eek! Bats!

Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch

2:00 p.m.

Do they really suck blood? Do they really get caught in your hair? Are they friend or foe? Let the ranger tell you the truth about these amazing creatures and the enemy among them.

Duration: 45 minutes

Difficulty: Easy



Tuesdays

Black Bears in the Smokies

Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch

2:00 p.m.

There's danger everywhere, high and low but always close, especially if you're an American ursus. Learn how we are the greatest danger to the American black bear.

Duration: 45 minutes



Wednesdays

Welcome Home!

Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch

Starting June 24 at 2:00 p.m.

After more than a century of absence, the elk have returned. Relax, have a seat on the visitor center porch and hear the story of the return of the largest mammal to the Great Smoky Mountains.

Duration: 45 minutes



Thursdays

Cherokee Culture

Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch Area

1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Join Cherokee friends to learn about Cherokee culture and history through demonstrations and storytelling.

Duration: 2 hours



Fridays

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!

Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the

Oconaluftee Visitor Center

5:00 p.m.

Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You'll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!

Duration: 30 minutes

Saturdays

Smoky Mountain Elk

Oconaluftee Visitor

Center Porch Area

11:00 a.m.

Fall is a great time for viewing elk in rut and to listen as they bugle. Discover how elk stay warm in the winter. Feel the weight of the antlers they carry on their head. A ranger will be available to answer your questions about elk and let you know the best places in the park to see and hear the elk.

Duration: 30 minutes



CATA- LOOCHEE VALLEY

Sundays

Junior Ranger:

Smoky Mountain Elk

Palmer House,

Cataloochee Valley

5:30 p.m.

It's all about connection and balance in nature to insure survival for elk and other species living together in an ecosystem. Learn about the history of the elk through "show and tell" activities. Then stay and watch the elk come into in the fields!

Duration: 45 minutes

FAMILIES: Reward yourselves!

HIKE THE SMOKIES & EARN YOUR



HIKE THE FOR SMOKIES FAMILIES

Available at
park visitor centers!

TAKE THE TOUR! MOUNTAIN FARM MUSEUM AUDIO TOUR

FROM FIELD TO FORK: THE JOYS AND HARDSHIPS OF FEEDING
A FAMILY ON A MOUNTAIN FARM

The Mountain Farm Museum comes alive with this dramatic audio tour from the National Park Service and Great Smoky Mountains Association. 30 minutes long. Keyed to points of interest throughout the farm museum.

**ONLY
\$2.99!**



if you are in love with...

the Great Smoky Mountains...

become a
member



Since 1953, Great Smoky Mountains

Association has supported the educational, scientific, and historical efforts of the National Park Service through cash donations and in-kind services. In 2015 alone, the association plans to provide more than \$1 million in assistance that includes saving hemlock trees, living history demonstrations, environmental education programs, salaries for backcountry patrols, and historic preservation.

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 semi-annual, full-color magazine *Smokies Life*;
- Digital access to the quarterly park newspaper, *Smokies Guide*, the association's newsletter, *The Bearpaw*, and the monthly *Cub Report*
- A 15-20% discount on books, music, gifts, and other products sold at park visitor centers and at our web store
- Discounts up to 20% at more than 400 national park bookstores across the country
- Special discounts at area rental cabins, inns, restaurants, shops, and attractions
- And most importantly, the satisfaction of helping to preserve nature and history in Great Smoky Mountains National Park

Join today using the coupon to the right or visit www.SmokiesInformation.org, or call us at 1-888-898-9102 x222. Memberships start at just \$35. per year.

JOHN DICKSON PHOTO



Great Smoky Mountains National Park is one of the few national parks without an entrance fee. Most large parks now charge \$30 or more per vehicle. Without this supplemental income, it is difficult for the Smokies to adequately protect wildlife, preserve historic areas, and provide educational opportunities. You can help the Smokies by using some of the money you saved at the entrance to support the park partners on this page.

field school

An exciting variety of adventures await adults who long to get out and explore the park accompanied by expert guides. Programs are offered by the Smoky Mountain Field School and include Mt. Le Conte overnights, wildlife workshops, edible plants, wildflower photography, animal tracking, bird watching, salamanders, mountain cooking, and more. One day programs start at as little as \$49. Contact: (865) 974-0150 or smfs.utk.edu

gsmit at tremont

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides residential environmental education programs in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Up to 5,000 students and adults annually attend workshops and school programs at the Institute. Tremont's adult workshops include birding, backpacking, environmental education, naturalist weekends, teacher escapes, and photography. Contact (865) 448-6709 or www.gsmit.org

summer camps

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont offers a variety of summer youth camps in the national park. Camps last from 6-11 days and cost from \$555. Fees include meals, lodging, and most equipment.

This year's offerings include: Discovery Camp (ages 9-12), Wilderness Adventure Trek, Girls in Science (ages 12-15), and Teen High Adventure (ages 13-17).

Contact: (865) 448-6709, or www.gsmit.org

GSMA MEMBERS

"Get Rooted in the Smokies"

- Acorn (youth) Membership \$15
- Buckeye Annual Membership \$35
- Chestnut Annual Membership \$100
- Dogwood Membership \$200
- Hemlock Lifetime Membership \$1,000
payable in 5 installments
- Annual Business Membership \$250

SIGN ME UP!

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Email (*for Cub Report*) _____

Telephone # _____

Please include your check with this form. Mail to:

GSMA, P.O. Box 130, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. 1-888-898-9102

support the
friends

Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a nonprofit organization that assists the National Park Service by raising funds and public awareness and providing volunteers for park projects.

Since 1993, Friends has



raised over \$34 million for park projects and programs. These donations help:

- protect elk, bear, brook trout, and other wildlife
- improve trails, campsites, and backcountry shelters
- support educational programs for school children
- improve visitor facilities
- fund special educational services like the park movie
- preserve log cabins and other historic structures

Your donation can help make these projects a reality. Put a few coins or a few dollars in one of the donation boxes located at visitor centers, roadsides, and other locations around the park. Buy the Smokies license plate for your car (available in Tennessee and North Carolina).

However you choose to give, your donation will really help protect the Great Smoky Mountains for many years to come!

Friends of the Smokies
P.O. Box 1660
Kodak, TN 37764
(865) 932-4794
1-800-845-5665
www.friendsofthesmokies.org

visitor information

for more information, www.nps.gov/grsm

information

General park information:

(865) 436-1200

www.nps.gov/grsm

Backcountry information

(865) 436-1297

www.smokiespermits.nps.gov

To order maps & guides

(865) 436-7318 x226

www.smokiesinformation.org

emergencies

Listed below are some numbers to call **for emergencies** that arise 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.

regulations

Picking or digging plants is prohibited in the park.

Persons feeding wildlife are subject to a \$5,000 fine.

Pets are not permitted on most park trails. Only the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails allow dogs on a leash.

accessibility

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

