



# SMOKIES GUIDE

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

## In This Issue

- Smokies Trip Planner • 2**
- Native Plants at Home • 4**
- National Park News • 5**
- Summer Driving Map • 6**
- Park Etiquette • 8**
- Safety in the Mountains • 9**
- How to Help the Smokies • 10**
- Jr. Ranger Page • 11**
- Visitor Information • 12**

Image courtesy of Diego Ferron



Lisa Malinis, Chief of Resource Management and Science

## Make Your Visit #SmokiesSafe

*Planning a trip in extraordinary times*

COVID-19 continues to affect every facet of life in our region. As Great Smoky Mountains National Park resumes operations this summer, park staff are committed to protecting the health and safety of visitors, employees, and volunteers.

For your own sake and that of others, please follow these important tips to make your trip #SmokiesSafe.

Delay your trip if you're not feeling well or have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19.

Avoid crowded areas. If you get to a trailhead or overlook and the parking lot is full, do not park along the road shoulder. Choose another destination.

Maintain at least six feet between yourself and others around you whether on the

trail or at park facilities. Send only one or two members of your party into visitor centers for information or purchases.

On the trail, hiking etiquette is to give those going uphill the right of way when passing in tighter quarters. Find a place to safely step off trail and allow others to pass.

Pack in and pack out everything you need for the day—including water, snacks, and hand sanitizer.

Some restrooms may be closed in the early phases of resumed operations. If restrooms are open, wash your hands and keep the areas clean for all users.

Find out what campgrounds, picnic areas, and visitor center areas are open by checking the park website at [nps.gov/grsm/](https://nps.gov/grsm/) or calling 865.436.1200, ext. 631, for road information.

## HOW YOU CAN 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

## Words with a Ranger

I head up the division that manages all the cultural and natural resources in the park. My main responsibility is to oversee the six programs in the division, including fisheries/water quality, vegetation management, long-term ecological monitoring, cultural resource management, wildlife management, and air quality.

My father is a scientist, and early on he encouraged me to figure out what I wanted to do for my career. I loved being outside and was

*Words with a Ranger continues on page 5*

## COVID-19

Following guidance from the White House, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and state and local public health authorities, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is increasing recreational access and services through a phased approach. Park managers have implemented an Adaptive Operations Plan with five operational phases. The park's plan is designed to be adaptive to regional conditions by increasing or decreasing the scope of park operations as appropriate.

Check [nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/conditions.htm](http://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, and Cataloochee campgrounds. Reservations also may be made at Cades Cove, Cosby, Elkmont, and Smokemont. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance. Make your reservation at [recreation.gov](http://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 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 and may be secured up to a year in advance.

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

- **Abrams Creek** 16 sites, elev. 1,125', \$17.50, 12' trailers
- **Balsam Mountain** 42 sites, elev. 5,310', \$17.50, 30' RVs
- **Big Creek** 12 sites, elev. 1,700', \$17.50, tents only
- **Cades Cove** 159 sites, elev. 1,807', \$21-\$25, 35'-40' RVs
- **Cataloochee** 27 sites, elev. 2,610', \$25, 31' RVs
- **Cosby** 157 sites, elev. 2,459', \$17.50, 25' RVs
- **Deep Creek** 92 sites, elev. 1,800', \$21, 26' RVs
- **Elkmont** 220 sites, elev. 2,150', \$21-\$27, 32'-35' RVs
- **Smokemont** 142 sites, elev. 2,198', \$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](http://lecontelodge.com)
- **Bryson City** 800.867.9246 or [greatsmokies.com](http://greatsmokies.com)
- **Cherokee** 828.788.0034 or [cherokeesmokies.com](http://cherokeesmokies.com)
- **Fontana** 800.849.2258 or [fontanavillage.com](http://fontanavillage.com)
- **Gatlinburg** 800.588.1817 or [gatlinburg.com](http://gatlinburg.com)
- **Maggie Valley** 800.624.4431 or [maggievalley.org](http://maggievalley.org)
- **Pigeon Forge** 800.251.9100 or [mypigeonforge.com](http://mypigeonforge.com)
- **Sevierville** 888.766.5948 or [visitsevierville.com](http://visitsevierville.com)

- Townsend 800.525.6834 or [smokymountains.org](http://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

*Events are subject to cancellation.*

**December 12** Festival of Christmas Past: Sugarlands Visitor Center

**December 19** Holiday Homecoming: Oconaluftee Visitor Center

**Postponed until September 2021**  
Music of the Mountains: Sugarlands Visitor Center

## For rent

The Appalachian Clubhouse and Spence Cabin at Elkmont can be rented for daytime events. Contact [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov).

## Visitor centers

**Hours are subject to change.**  
Summer hours of operation are: Oconaluftee, Sugarlands, and Cades Cove: 9-5  
Clingmans Dome: 10-4

## Picnic areas

Picnic areas are open at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Chimney Tops, Collins Creek, Cosby, Deep Creek, Greenbrier and Metcalf Bottoms. Check [nps.gov/grsm](http://nps.gov/grsm) for updates. See map on page 12 for locations. Picnic pavilions may be reserved for \$12.50-\$80 at [recreation.gov](http://recreation.gov).



## MOVING ROCKS HARMS AQUATIC LIFE.

## SMOKIES GUIDE

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

[nps.gov/grsm](http://nps.gov/grsm)  
[SmokiesInformation.org](http://SmokiesInformation.org)

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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 thunder-showers.

• **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](https://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](https://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](https://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.

Summer hikers should be especially aware of the dangers of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and hyponatremia—the result of inadequate sodium and electrolyte levels. Always carry an ample supply of water, snacks, and sun protection.

Reduce the risk of hypothermia, a danger even in summer, 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.

# Supporting Wildlife with Native Plants

*Planting flowering natives at home attracts pollinators and restores habitat for wildlife*

Two years ago, park partner Discover Life in America (DLiA) dedicated a brand new grant-funded pollinator garden at Sugarlands Visitor Center. The garden—a collaboration led by Great Smoky Mountains National Park in partnership with DLiA and with support from Great Smoky Mountains Association—was specifically designed to feature native flowering plants of the Smokies as part of a broader National Pollinator Health Strategy spurred by the alarming decline of insect populations throughout the country.

Now well-established and in full summer bloom, the Sugarlands pollinator garden showcases the mutually beneficial relationship between native plants of the Smokies and the pollinating birds and insects that depend on them, including bees, moths, butterflies, beetles, and flies. The garden also serves as a model of wildlife gardening for those who may be interested in converting their own lawn, porch, or even windowsill into a slice of pollinator habitat.

Great Smoky Mountains National Park is rich with diverse vegetation and home to more than 1,600 species of flowering plants. Roughly 500 park plant species are considered rare, and 76 species are listed as threatened or endangered in the states of Tennessee and North Carolina. Ground-level ozone, or “smog,” has also been documented to negatively affect at least 30 native plant species in the Smokies.

While many of these specific native plant species may be harder to come by in more general nurseries or difficult to propagate, now is a great time to learn more about the flowering plants that are native to your own part of the world.

Here are a few plants found in the Smokies that you might try sourcing from your local nursery to help ecological resilience across greater Southern Appalachia:

**Sun plants** generally attract bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

- Asters (*Symphotrichum spp.*)
- Bee balm (*Monarda didyma*)
- Black-eyed susan (*Rudbeckia fulgida*)
- Butterfly weed (*Asclepias tuberosa*)

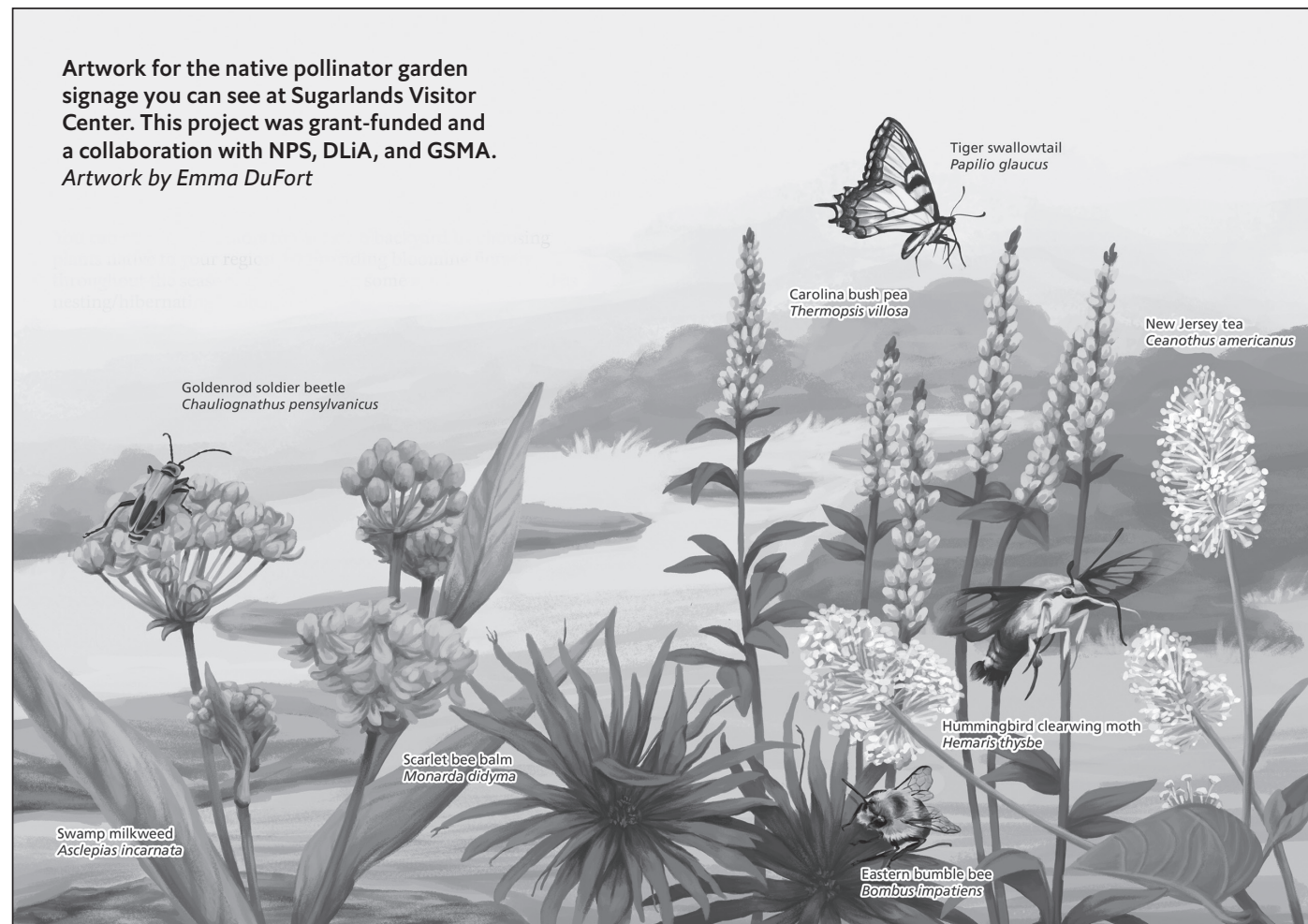
- Carolina bush pea (*Thermopsis villosa*)
- Coreopsis (*Coreopsis spp.*)
- Crossvine (*Bignonia capreolata*)
- Fringe tree (*Chionanthus virginicus*)
- Goldenrods (*Solidago spp.*)
- Indian pink (*Spigelia marilandica*)
- New Jersey tea (*Ceanothus americanus*)
- Phlox (*Phlox paniculata*, *P. maculata*)
- Purple coneflower (*Echinacea purpurea*)
- Redbud (*Cercis canadensis*)
- Spicebush (*Lindera benzoin*)
- Sumacs (*Rhus spp.*)
- Swamp milkweed (*Asclepias incarnata*)
- Sweet Joe-Pye-Weed (*Eupatorium purpureum*)

**Shade plants** generally attract flies, beetles, and other small insects.

- Alumroot (*Heuchera spp.*)
- Goatsbeard (*Astilbe spp.*)
- Mayapple (*Podophyllum peltatum*)
- Red columbine (*Aquilegia canadensis*)
- Sweetshrub (*Calycanthus spp.*)
- Wild geranium (*Geranium maculatum*)

\*ssp.: multiple species with several cultivated varieties available

**It is illegal to harvest plants in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. If you see someone poaching plants, call 865.436.1230 or report this activity to the nearest ranger station.**



Words with a Ranger continued from page 1

fascinated by how interconnected the natural world seemed to be. I started with classes in general biology, but other than that, I was clueless about what I wanted. Finally, he said, “What do you NOT want to do?” to which I responded that I did not want to work in a lab. I later took a botany class and learned that some types of plants have a dependent relationship with fire. That cemented my interest in fire ecology, and I went to graduate school to learn more.

The Smokies are affected by natural ecological processes such as precipitation and temperature and natural disturbances such as fire. However, the park is also subject to human impacts caused by acidification, introduction of invasive species, and fragmentation of habitats. I am most proud of playing a small role in restoring systems, documenting change through long-term monitoring, and helping educate the public about the changes we are seeing—both good and bad. People can do their part to help by learning about how we are all connected to the environment and how our individual actions add up—here in the Smokies or wherever it is you live.

The best part of my job is working in this beautiful park with a team of dedicated and talented people. From archeologists, entomologists, and data managers to water quality interns, air scientists, and bear biologists, I am empowered by the passion and knowledge of the people with whom I work. I learn from them every day and strive to empower them in return.

The world has changed since I arrived in my position five months ago. The introduction of COVID-19 caused negative and positive impacts to how we manage natural and cultural resources. Stay-at-home orders mean that invasive species management and research projects are delayed. It also means near-zero vehicle emissions and uninterrupted natural soundscapes for breeding birds. As we continue to adapt to this novel situation, I’ll be working to redefine how to safely continue managing the natural and cultural resources of the Smokies.

### Connecting with the Smokies from Home

The challenges of the last few months have spurred creative efforts to connect Smokies lovers to their favorite place when visiting has, at times, not been possible.

Great Smoky Mountains Association, an educational partner of the park, used its award-winning publication, *Smokies Life* magazine, as inspiration for a new online endeavor. **Smokies LIVE**, a collaborative virtual magazine, has been delivering new content to readers daily since late March. Writers, interpreters, photographers, artists, and GSMA staff have brought their various talents and expertise to a diverse array of Smokies stories.

The new concept even sparked other avenues for reaching the Smokies faithful. GSMA launched a podcast called **Smoky Mountain Air** featuring Smokies-related stories, interviews, and author readings. Staff digitized four ‘Missing Issues’ of *Smokies Life* magazine and will soon make available a few other issues that can no longer be found in print.

“The neatest thing about all these projects,” said Frances Figart, GSMA’s creative services director, “is that we seized an opportunity to develop new storytelling tools that will remain available to us long after COVID-19 is history.”

Smokies LIVE, Smoky Mountain Air, and other GSMA efforts including digitized ‘Missing Issues’ of *Smokies Life* can be found at [SmokiesInformation.org/news](http://SmokiesInformation.org/news).



Meanwhile, a coalition of park partners, including Friends of the Smokies, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, Discover Life in America, and GSMA, worked with National Park Service staff in the Smokies to develop a new digital learning space to support outdoor education.

**Smokieeee's @ Home** invites students of any age to **Explore** nature-related topics and activities, be **Entertained** through music, art, and stories, and **Escape** with a chance for quiet observation of the natural world. Videos, materials, and activities can be found at [Smokieees.org](http://Smokieees.org), with new content being added even as the park resumes operations.

“We hope you’ll join us for an opportunity to virtually experience the Smokies,” said Superintendent Cassius Cash of the Smokieeee’s educational effort. “I invite you to pause and enjoy a Smokies break online with us.”

In addition to these new endeavors, the park and its partners redoubled their social media efforts with exciting and engaging projects. During National Park Week, park staff asked the public to share their favorite photos and memories of the park through social media, and Smokies lovers answered the call. Park partners also got creative with distance activities like The Great American Camp-in (Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont), the Virtual Fireflies Event (DLiA), and the Alum Cave At-Home Adventure (Friends of the Smokies). GSMNP official social media accounts are listed on the front of this *Smokies Guide*.

### Environmental Monitoring Continues during COVID Closure

While GSMNP remained closed from March 24 to May 9 as part of a nationwide effort to slow the spread of COVID-19, some NPS scientific programs like air quality monitoring remained active throughout the closure. The data collected may provide an insight into the effects of airborne pollutants in the Smokies.

“Long-term monitoring is critical in understanding how park resources are changing over time and how they compare to other places,” said Air Resource Specialist Jim Renfro. “The park is committed to continue this monitoring to provide data to meet certain legal mandates and national reporting requirements related to public health and natural resource protection.”

Although exhaust from vehicles within the park accounts for less than one percent of park air pollution, regional vehicle and power-plant emissions do significantly impact park haze and pollution levels. Ozone in particular is harmful to humans, wildlife, and sensitive vegetation in the Smokies.

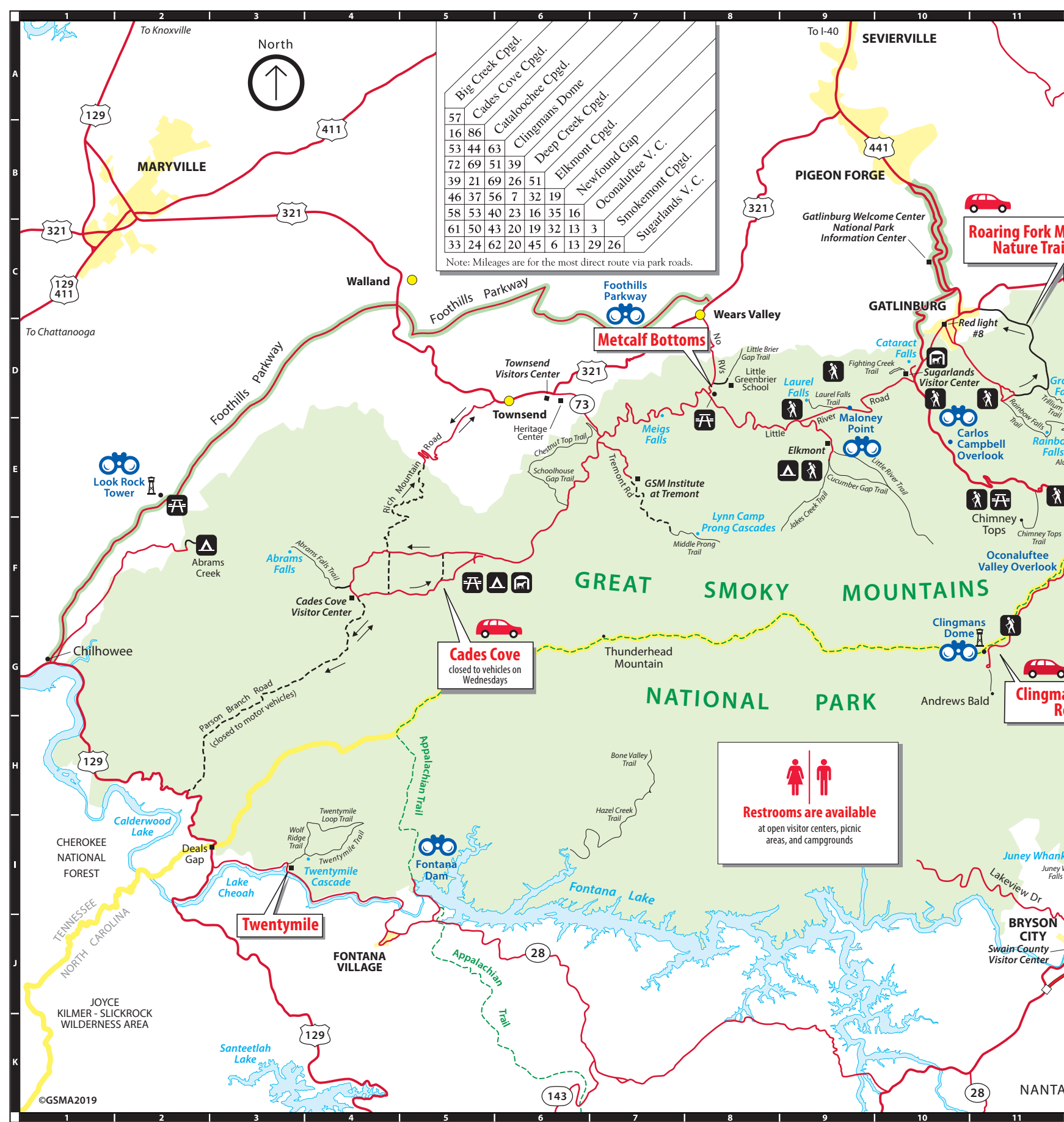
“The air quality branch will follow up after lab analysis and quality assurance checks to look at the effect of the significant reduction in motor vehicle emissions in and near the park. Concentrations of ozone, particulate matter, nitrogen, and carbon gases and particles will be analyzed,” said Renfro. “Staff will also look at the effect of noise pollution with the reduction in commercial air travel over the park.”

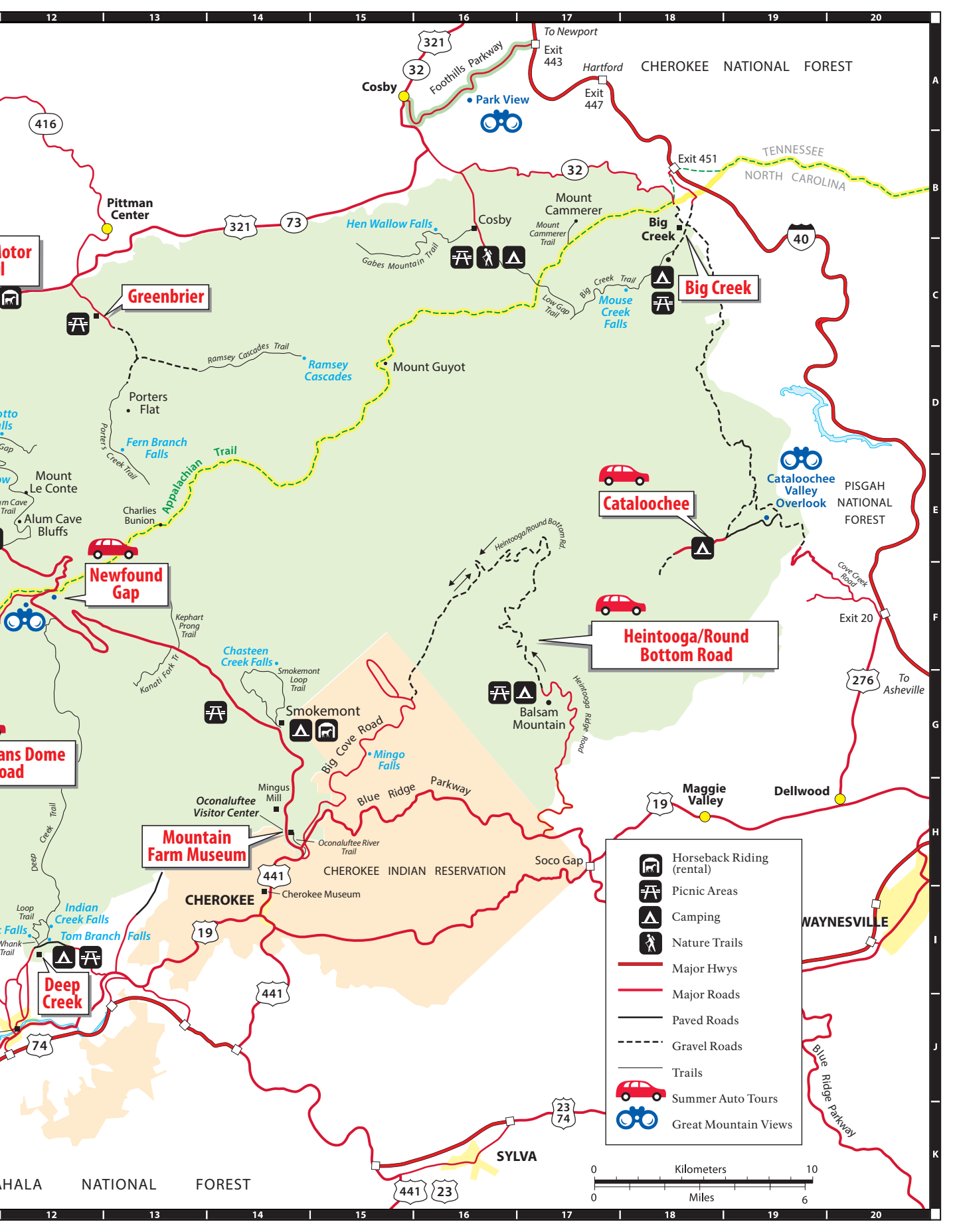
# The Ten Essentials Checklist

Before you head out on that backpacking trip, ask yourself these basic questions: Can I respond positively to an accident or emergency? Can I safely spend a night or more in the backcountry?

The items you carry along on your trip can determine whether you are prepared for a safe backcountry experience. Below are ten essentials that all backpackers should have:

- Navigation: map and compass
- Insulation: extra clothing, sleeping bag
- Illumination: headlamp, flashlight
- First-aid supplies
- Fire: waterproof matches/lighter/candle
- Repair kit and tools
- Nutrition: extra food
- Hydration: extra water, filter, or tablets
- Shelter: tent, tarp, garbage bag, emergency blanket
- Sun protection: sunglasses, sunscreen





**Greenbrier**












**Big Creek**

**Cataloochee**

**Heintooga/Round Bottom Road**

**Mountain Farm Museum**

**Deep Creek**

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



CHALA NATIONAL FOREST

WAYNESVILLE

SYLVA

CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

TENNESSEE  
NORTH CAROLINA

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST

CHEROKEE INDIAN RESERVATION

CHEROKEE

Pittman Center

Cosby

Cosby

Hen Wallow Falls

Mount Cammerer

Big Creek

Mount Guyot

Cataloochee Valley Overlook

PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST

Newfound Gap

Smokemont

Balsam Mountain

Maggie Valley

Dellwood

Chasteen Creek Falls

Mingo Falls

Indian Creek Falls

Tom Branch Falls

Deep Creek

Whank Trail

Loop Trail

Deep Creek Trail

Whank Trail

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# When Nature Calls: Dealing with Waste the Right Way

*Bears do it. Birds do it. Even fish do it.*

## PARK *Etiquette*

Pooping in the park is only natural for Smokies wildlife. But for the rest of us, it's important to follow a few simple rules for disposing of waste when away from park restroom facilities.

### Bring the Essentials

Before you set out for the trail, pack these essentials so you're well prepared to answer nature's call and leave no trace:

- Lightweight camping trowel
- Toilet paper
- Plastic bags for packing out waste

### Find Your Spot

Privacy is only half the battle. Being mindful to avoid stepping on sensitive plants and flowers, find a spot at least 100 feet away from trails, campsites, and water sources. Waterways are not bathrooms. "Using the woods" allows the soil to filter and break down organic matter.

### Make a Cathole

Use a trowel to dig a hole roughly 6–8 inches deep. When you're done with number two, be sure to completely bury all solid waste and deposit any used toilet paper in the hole before thoroughly filling it in.

### Pack Out Waste

Completely bury or pack out all used toilet paper—even if you're just going number one. Surface-level toilet paper left behind is a common issue and hazard for backcountry rangers and hikers in the park. Do your part by packing out all waste and practicing Leave No Trace principles wherever you are to help keep the Smokies pristine.

*Illustration by Emma DuFort*

## HOW TO MAKE AN EFFECTIVE CATHOLE

TAKE IT  
FROM A PRO!



### 1. PACK A TROWEL

Unless you have bobcat paws, you'll probably prefer to dig with one of these. A standard garden trowel will do, or you can purchase a backpacking trowel from any visitor center.

### 2. DIG A 6-8" DEEP HOLE

This is the most important part! The hole should be at least 6 inches deep, not wide. This will allow the soil to efficiently break down the waste without affecting the surface layer.



### 3. BURY IT!

When you're done, bury the waste by thoroughly filling the cathole back up. You can bury your toilet paper or pack it out, but please don't leave it on the surface for someone else to clean up!

Thanks for keeping it clean!





# 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).**

## BASIC PACK LIST

- Water, a water filter, tablets, or the ability to boil water
- Food and 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 (ziplocs 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)

**H**iking in the heat can be tough, even on a relatively short trip. Plan ahead, know your limitations, and be sure to pack the essentials this summer.



## 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 from campgrounds; imported wood contains dangerous and invasive pests. Do not leave 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

For eons, the Great Smoky Mountains have stood watch over the Southern Appalachian region. The park depends on the four primary nonprofit partners described here, as well as on 2,800 park volunteers who help its staff meet the needs of 12.5 million visitors and 522,000 acres of unexploited resources. In addition to these partners, the park fosters collaborative relationships with its gateway communities, universities, and other service and learning groups.

## Great Smoky Mountains Association

Since 1953, the nonprofit Great Smoky Mountains Association has supported the educational, scientific, and historical preservation efforts of the NPS by operating the park's educational bookstores, publishing books and other media about the park's natural and cultural resources, and contributing cash donations to support park programs. Over the years, GSMA has contributed more than \$44 million to assist with living history demonstrations, saving hemlock trees, wildlife and resource education internships, construction of 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 semi-annual full-color magazine *Smokies Life*
- Digital access to this award-winning quarterly park newspaper, *Smokies Guide*, e-newsletter and Smokies LIVE e-blasts
- A 15-20% discount on books, music, gifts, and other products sold at park visitor centers and at GSMA's web store
- Special GSMA group hikes, backpacking excursions, and

educational sessions led by experts invite you to immerse yourself in the sights, sounds, and smells of the outdoors and learn more about nature and history in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Join today by visiting [SmokiesInformation.org](http://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 \$68 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
- 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. Management and research programs are critical in maintaining a healthy environment for the park's abundant wildlife—bears, elk, native brook trout, and much more.

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](http://FriendsOfTheSmokies.org) or calling 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.

DLiA celebrated the 20th year of the



ATBI in 2018. To date, DLiA has helped add more than 10,000 species to the inventory of life in the park. This year, the tally has risen to 9,718 species new to the park and 1,025 species completely new to science! You can support DLiA by purchasing the Smokies Species-a-Day perpetual calendar. Learn more at [DLiA.org](http://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 birding, 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 all of its wonders. Fees include meals, lodging, and most equipment. Contact 865.448.6709 or visit [GSMIT.org](http://GSMIT.org) to learn more!

**GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT**

## 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
- Lookout League Business Memberships \$250-\$1,000

## SIGN ME UP!

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

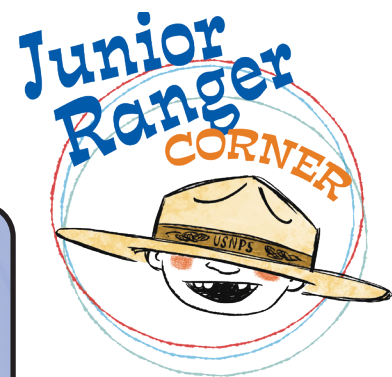
Address \_\_\_\_\_

Email (for e-newsletter) \_\_\_\_\_

Phone # \_\_\_\_\_

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

# BIRD BINGO



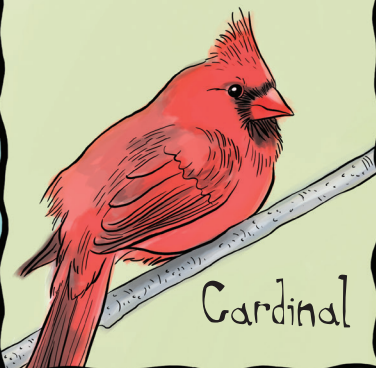
Purple martin



Robin



Cardinal



I heard  
a bird!

Owl



Wren



I saw a  
bird egg!

Chickadee



I saw a  
bird nest!

Woodpecker



Wood thrush



Hearing  
"ee-oh-lay"  
counts!

Hawk



Mourning dove



Goldfinch



Blue jay



Hummingbird

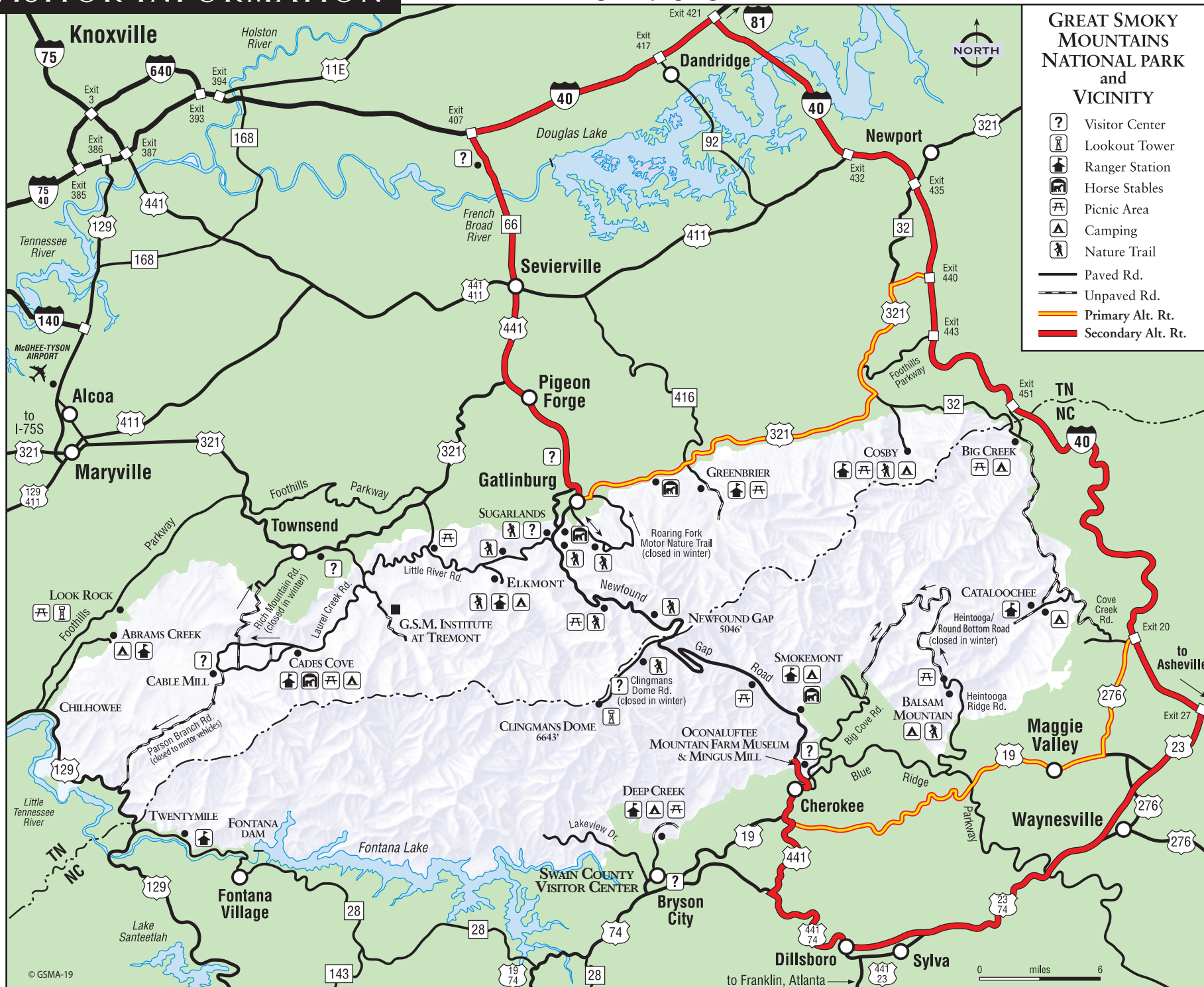


Test your detective skills! Pictured are birds or things bird-related that you might see in Great Smoky Mountains National Park as well as in your own neighborhood. Each time you spy one, put an X in its square until you get four in a row. For extra challenge, see if you can find all 16.

Illustrations by  
Lisa Horstman

# VISITOR INFORMATION

For more information, go to [nps.gov/grsm](http://nps.gov/grsm)



## Information

**General park info:**  
865.436.1200 • [nps.gov/grsm](http://nps.gov/grsm)  
**Backcountry information:**  
865.436.1297  
[smokiespermits.nps.gov](http://smokiespermits.nps.gov)  
**To order maps and guides:**  
865.436.7318 x226  
[SmokiesInformation.org](http://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.