

# Great Smoky Mountains National Park

National Park Service  
U.S. Department of the Interior



## SMOKIES GUIDE

The Official Newspaper of the Smokies • Summer 2024



Camille Bennett,  
Digital Communications Specialist

### Words with a Ranger

As a digital communications specialist, I help manage the park's website, mobile app, and social media content. In a park this big, teamwork is key—many park employees help create our digital content so visitors can plan their trips, learn about the park, and find critical safety information. I am grateful to be part of such a collaborative workplace.

Digital communications are essential both internally and externally, which means I get the chance to be plugged into everything, and I enjoy seeing and hearing about all the amazing work going on in the Smokies. We have so much to share—whether it's the latest scientific discovery or an update about a reopened trail or a restored cabin.

*Continued on page 12*

Catawba rhododendron, a species typically found in the park's highest elevations, blooms on a mountain ridge. High-elevation hikes are popular during summer months, but trailhead parking can fill quickly.

### Explore More with a Shuttle This Summer

*Shuttle services offer a dependable transportation alternative*

**P**lanning an adventure in the Smokies this summer but worried about finding a parking spot? Local shuttle services can take the uncertainty out of trip planning and guarantee a stress-free ride to the destination of your choice.

Several local businesses offer shuttles to and from the park's most popular hubs—including Newfound Gap, Alum Cave trailhead, and Rainbow Falls trailhead—where demand for parking regularly exceeds capacity. Some shuttles maintain a regular route and schedule, while others can be reserved for any time and pick-up or drop-off location. Prices generally range from \$10 to \$25 per person depending on the destination and provider, and services cater to single passengers as well as groups of up to 15.

Summer can be a particularly busy time in the Smokies, where annual

visitation regularly exceeds that of Yellowstone, Yosemite, and Grand Canyon national parks combined. All vehicles parked anywhere in Great Smoky Mountains National Park for longer than 15 minutes must display a valid parking tag. Parking tags do not guarantee a specific parking spot in a specific location, and parking spaces continue to be available on a first come, first served basis.

Mid-week and early mornings or late afternoons are usually the best times to secure parking, but if no spaces are available, visitors will need to try an alternative destination or time.

For more information about shuttles and a list of authorized providers, visit [go.nps.gov/grsmshuttles](https://go.nps.gov/grsmshuttles). Park staff cannot make shuttle reservations for visitors. The Backcountry Office offers additional trip-planning help at 865.436.1297.



### PARKING TAG REQUIRED!

Parking in the Smokies for more than 15 minutes requires a valid parking tag (annual tag pictured).

For more info, scan code with camera app



OUR PARK  
ON SOCIAL MEDIA



GreatSmoky  
MountainsNPS



GreatSmokyNPS



GreatSmokyNPS

# SMOKIES TRIP PLANNER



## Visitor centers

**Sugarlands, Oconaluftee, and Cades Cove:** open 9 a.m.–5 p.m. June through September. **Cades Cove** open 7 a.m.–3 p.m. Wednesdays. **Clingmans Dome:** open 9:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m. June through September. **GSM Institute at Tremont:** open 10 a.m.–4 p.m. Tuesday–Saturday.



## Road closures

- **Cades Cove Loop Road** is closed to vehicles on Wednesdays from May 1 through September 25 to allow for non-motorized recreation.
- All park roads are subject to temporary closure during dangerous driving conditions. Visit [nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm) and click “Alerts.”



## Shuttle services

Local shuttle services offer convenient transportation to and from the park’s most iconic destinations. Routes, schedules, pricing, and pick-up/drop-off locations vary. Visit [go.nps.gov/grsmshuttles](https://go.nps.gov/grsmshuttles) for a list of authorized concessioners.



## Weather

In summer, the Smokies are often hot, hazy, and humid by mid-June. Most precipitation occurs as afternoon thundershowers.

By mid-September, a pattern of warm, sunny days and crisp, clear nights begins. However, cool, rainy days may also occur.



## Special events and ranger activities

See pages 4–5 for ranger activities, inquire at a visitor center, or visit [go.nps.gov/grsmcalendar](https://go.nps.gov/grsmcalendar) for a full calendar of events.



## Campgrounds in the national park

The National Park Service maintains developed campgrounds at ten locations in the park. There are no showers, and hookups are only available at Look Rock Campground (ten campsites include electric and water hookups). There are circuits for special medical uses at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont.

Campsite reservations are required at all park campgrounds. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance.

Make your reservation online at [recreation.gov](https://recreation.gov) or call 877.444.6777.

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

Campsites for larger groups are available at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Cosby, Deep Creek, Elkmont, and Smokemont. Reservations are required and may be secured up to a year in advance. For more information, visit [nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm).

Site	No. of Sites	Elevation	Open Dates 2024	Nightly Fees	Max RV Length
<b>Abrams Creek</b>	16	1,125'	4/26 – 10/27	\$30	12'
<b>Balsam Mountain</b>	43	5,310'	5/10 – 10/14	\$30	30'
<b>Big Creek</b>	12	1,700'	3/29 – 10/27	\$30	tents only
<b>Cades Cove</b>	159	1,807'	open year-round	\$30	35–40'
<b>Cataloochee</b>	27	2,610'	3/29 – 10/27	\$30	31'
<b>Cosby</b>	157	2,459'	3/29 – 10/27	\$30	25'
<b>Deep Creek</b>	92	1,800'	3/29 – 10/27	\$30	26'
<b>Elkmont</b>	220	2,150'	3/8 – 11/24	\$30	32–35'
<b>Look Rock</b>	68	2,600'	4/26 – 10/27	\$30–36	no limit
<b>Smokemont</b>	142	2,198'	open year-round	\$30	35–40'



## Firewood

To prevent the spread of destructive pests, only USDA- or state-certified heat-treated firewood may be brought into the park. Campers may gather dead and down wood in the park for campfires.



## Picnic areas

Picnic areas at Cades Cove, Deep Creek, Greenbrier, and Metcalf Bottoms are open year-round. Heintoooga closes October 14; Big Creek and Look Rock close October 27; Cosby closes October 28; Collins Creek and Twin Creeks close October 31; Chimneys closes December 2. Picnic pavilions may be reserved for a fee at [recreation.gov](https://recreation.gov).



## Accommodations

**LeConte Lodge** (accessible by trail only, closes November 27) provides the only lodging in the park. Advance reservations only. 865.429.5704, [lecontelodge.com](https://lecontelodge.com)



## Services

There are no gas stations, charging stations, showers, or restaurants in the national park. Limited food options are available in visitor centers and camp stores.



## Event reservations

Reserve the Appalachian Clubhouse or Spence Cabin at Elkmont for daytime events at [recreation.gov](https://recreation.gov). Cabin and clubhouse close October 31.



## Pets

Pets are allowed in campgrounds and along roads as long as they are restrained at all times. Pets are not allowed on park trails, except for Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails. Pets must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet. See page 6.

## SMOKIES GUIDE

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

[nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm)  
[SmokiesLife.org](https://SmokiesLife.org)

### Publication dates

Spring: March  
Summer: June  
Autumn: September  
Winter: December

### Editor

Aaron Searcy

### Editorial support

Valerie Polk  
Holly Keys

### Designer

Emma Oxford

### Design support

Karen Key  
Miranda Bemis

### NPS coordinators

Stephanie Kyriazis  
Stephanie Sutton

© 2024 Smokies Life  
P.O. Box 130  
Gatlinburg, TN 37738

Available in digital format at [issuu.com/greatsmokymountainsassociation](https://issuu.com/greatsmokymountainsassociation)

Printed on recycled paper





### Bicycling

Most park roads are too narrow and heavily traveled for safe or enjoyable bicycling. Bicycles are permitted on park roads but prohibited on trails except Gatlinburg, Oconaluftee River, and lower Deep Creek and Indian Creek trails. Helmets are required by law for persons age 16 or under and strongly recommended for all.

Cades Cove Loop Road is open exclusively to cyclists and pedestrians on Wednesdays from May 1 through September 25. Bikes may be rented at the Cades Cove Campground Store 9 a.m.–2:30 p.m. Bike rental opens early at 7 a.m. on vehicle-free Wednesdays. 865.448.9034.



### Horseback riding

Some 550 miles of park trails are open to horses. See park trail map for trails and rules. Horse camps are available at Anthony Creek, Big Creek, Cataloochee, Round Bottom, and Tow String. Make reservations at recreation.gov.

Three concession horseback riding stables offer rides from March through November.

- Cades Cove 865.448.9009 [cadescovestables.com](http://cadescovestables.com)
- Smokemont 828.497.2373 [smokemontridingstable.com](http://smokemontridingstable.com)
- Sugarlands 865.436.5470 [sugarlandsstables.com](http://sugarlandsstables.com)



### 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. Fishing with bait is prohibited. Special permits are required for the Qualla Boundary and Gatlinburg, and licenses are available in nearby towns. A free fishing map with a complete list of all park fishing regulations is available at visitor centers.



### Backcountry camping

Camping in the backcountry can be an exciting adventure for those who are 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 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 ([go.nps.gov/grsmmaps](http://go.nps.gov/grsmmaps)), 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 online at [SmokiesLife.org](http://SmokiesLife.org).

**2. Plan your trip.** Call the park's Backcountry Office

from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. or drop into the office located within Sugarlands Visitor Center for trip-planning help. The office is open to visitors during visitor center hours. 865.436.1297.

**3. Get a permit.** Make your reservation and get your permit through the Backcountry Office at Sugarlands Visitor Center (*by phone or in person*) or online at [smokiespermits.nps.gov](http://smokiespermits.nps.gov).

Reservations and permits are required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. The cost is \$8 per person per night. Reservations may be made up to 30 days in advance. Backcountry camping permit holders are not exempt from parking tag requirements.

Summer hikers should be especially aware of the dangers of dehydration, heat exhaustion, and hyponatremia—the combination of increased water intake and inadequate sodium and electrolyte levels. Drink when thirsty; rest and eat often. Always carry an ample supply of water, snacks, and sun protection. Know your limits. Reduce the risk of hypothermia, a danger even in summer, with layered clothing and rain gear.

See page 11 for more hiking tips and trip essentials.



*The only two pet-friendly trails in the Smokies are the Gatlinburg Trail in Tennessee and the Oconaluftee River Trail in North Carolina.*

**Learn the BARK principles so you and your pet can have a safe and fun visit in the Smokies.**

### Take the BARK pledge:



**B**ag and bin your pet's waste



**A**lways leash your pet



**R**espect wildlife



**K**now where you can go



**MOVING ROCKS HARMS AQUATIC LIFE.**

**GSMNP BY THE NUMBERS**



**12 million+** visitors per year



**1,000+** species new to science found in the park



**31** species of salamanders



**69** species of mammals



**10,400+** species of insects



**16** mtns. higher than 6,000'

**Download the free NPS App**

for interactive maps, tours, and more!



# RANGER ACTIVITIES







Event schedules are weather-dependent and subject to change. For a full list of programs, please visit:






[go.nps.gov/grsmcalendar](https://go.nps.gov/grsmcalendar)



NORTH DISTRICT (near Gatlinburg, TN)	WHEN?	MEETING LOCATION	DURATION/ ACCESSIBILITY
<b>Junior Ranger Ramble:</b> Join a ranger for walk, talk, or guided activity to learn more about natural and cultural history and become a steward of the park. Topics vary daily.	<b>Thursday, Friday, Saturday</b> 11 a.m.	Sugarlands Visitor Center	1 hour
<b>A Tale of Two States:</b> Come stand where President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated the park in 1940. Learn about how the people of two states came together to help create Great Smoky Mountains National Park.	<b>Tuesday, Thursday</b> 12 p.m.	Newfound Gap Rockefeller Memorial	1 hour
<b>Porters Creek Hike:</b> Ever wanted to be a detective? Join us as we go in search of signs of early homesteads in the Smokies and learn about cultural and natural history along the way.	<b>Monday, Tuesday</b> 11 a.m.	Porters Creek trailhead (Greenbrier)	3 hours
<b>Walker Sisters Hike:</b> Take a walk through the woods to the Walker family homesite and discover the folks who once lived in the mountains. Learn about communities, religion, education, and the “modern” conveniences of the day.	<b>Sunday, Friday</b> 1 p.m.	Little Greenbrier School	1.5 hours
<b>History of Daisy Town:</b> Explore the many restored cabins and vacation homes of Daisy Town and learn about the birth of regional tourism before the Great Smoky Mountains became a national park.	<b>Tuesday, Saturday</b> 11 a.m.	Jakes Creek parking lot (Elkmont)	1 hour
<b>Hen Wallow Falls Hike:</b> Hike 4.3 miles roundtrip with a ranger through hemlock and rhododendron forest via Gabes Mountain Trail to enjoy the refreshing mist of Hen Wallow Falls.	<b>Sunday, Friday</b> 10 a.m.	Cosby Picnic Area parking lot	3 hours
<b>Vital Signs of the Smokies:</b> Join a ranger for a walk or talk exploring the beauty and biodiversity of the park and learn about the vital signs of the Smokies that help us to track and better understand the challenges faced by this fragile ecosystem.	<b>Monday, Thursday</b> 12 p.m.	Newfound Gap Overlook	30 minutes–1.5 hours
<b>Cove Hardwood Hike:</b> Join a ranger for a family-friendly hike through an old-growth hardwood forest with leafy ferns, babbling creeks, and rich stories of the past.	<b>Wednesday</b> 9:30 a.m.	Chimneys Picnic Area, group picnic site	1.5 hours
<b>Bear with Us!:</b> Come learn all about an iconic symbol of Great Smoky Mountains National Park—black bears!	<b>Wednesday</b> 11 a.m.	Sugarlands Visitor Center	30 minutes
<b>Wildlife Wonders:</b> Wondering about what wild things live in the park? Learn about the incredible richness of Smokies biodiversity from bats and bugs to bears and much more.	<b>Sunday</b> 11 a.m.	Sugarlands Visitor Center	30 minutes



<b>SOUTH DISTRICT (near Cherokee, NC)</b>	<b>WHEN?</b>	<b>MEETING LOCATION</b>	<b>DURATION/ ACCESSIBILITY</b>
<b>Wild about the Smokies:</b> Join a ranger for a short talk about elk behavior, habitat, and ongoing conservation efforts to help them thrive in the Smokies. Get the inside scoop on where to spot these majestic creatures and how to do it safely.	<b>Daily</b> 3 p.m.	Oconaluftee Visitor Center porch	30 minutes 
<b>Clingmans Dome Guided Hike:</b> Join a ranger on this 1.5-mile guided hike that leads to majestic views atop Clingmans Dome Observation Tower. Hike through the park's unique spruce-fir forest and discover all that the Smokies has to offer.	<b>Monday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday</b> 11 a.m.	Clingmans Dome parking area	1.5 hours
<b>Deep Creek Waterfall Walk:</b> Deep Creek is defined by gushing waterfalls and peaceful streams. Join a ranger on this walk to discover these wonders and learn about the natural and cultural history of the area.	<b>Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday</b> 10:30 a.m.	Deep Creek trailhead	1 hour
<b>Down on the Farm:</b> Immerse yourself in Smokies history! See how families survived here with demonstrations such as blacksmithing, fencing, or broom-making. Program topic varies. Check the Oconaluftee Visitor Center for more information.	<b>Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday</b> Drop in, 1–3 p.m.	Mountain Farm Museum	Drop in 
<b>Return of the Elk:</b> Learn about how elk—which were nearly extinct due to overhunting and loss of habitat across North America—managed to return to the Smokies, filling the Cataloochee Valley once again with their echoing bugles every fall.	<b>Sunday</b> 1 p.m.	Cataloochee Valley	1 hour
<b>Old-Time Music Jam:</b> Join in with local musicians playing old-time songs on traditional Appalachian instruments like the banjo and mountain dulcimer. All experience levels and instruments are welcome.	<b>Third Saturday of the month</b> 1 p.m.	Oconaluftee Visitor Center porch	2 hours 
<b>Poetry in Parks:</b> Attend the unveiling of a special picnic table featuring a nature-themed poem selected by US Poet Laureate Ada Limón. After the unveiling, join park staff and partners for fun family activities that connect park science and culture to art.	<b>Saturday, July 20</b> 11 a.m.–3 p.m.	Oconaluftee Visitor Center porch	Formal program 11–11:30 p.m., drop-in stations 12–3 p.m. 

<b>CADES COVE (near Townsend, TN)</b>	<b>WHEN?</b>	<b>MEETING LOCATION</b>	<b>DURATION/ ACCESSIBILITY</b>
<b>Bear Aware:</b> Join us in the picnic area for a short chat about bears in the Smokies, what to do if you see one, and how it takes all of us working together to keep them healthy and wild.	<b>Sunday, Monday, Thursday, Saturday</b> 11 a.m., 1:30 p.m.	Cades Cove Picnic Area	30 minutes 
<b>Drop into History:</b> Watch historical demonstrations related to life in Cades Cove and possibly try some for yourself. Demos will vary but may include blacksmithing, Appalachian music, quilting, storytelling, doll-making, weaving, or other skills.	<b>Monday, Thursday, Saturday</b> Drop in, 10 a.m.–2 p.m.	Cable Mill Historic Area	Drop in 
<b>Burning Daylight:</b> Had “too many irons in the fire” for a while? Stop by the Becky Cable House to “shoot the breeze” and learn about the origins of some colorful common phrases. You’ll learn “more than you can shake a stick at.”	<b>Sunday, Tuesday, Friday</b> 10 a.m.	Cable Mill Historic Area, Becky Cable House	30 minutes 
<b>Old Time Technology:</b> Take a walking tour of the historic buildings in the mill area to learn how residents used innovative technology to make life in Cades Cove more comfortable and efficient.	<b>Sunday, Tuesday, Friday</b> 11 a.m.	Cable Mill Historic Area, Program Circle	30 minutes 
<b>Wild Things:</b> Bring the whole family for an interactive experience to learn about some of the creatures that call Cades Cove home. Some programs are accessible—check at the ranger station.	<b>Sunday, Tuesday, Friday</b> 2 p.m.	Cable Mill Historic Area, Program Circle	45 minutes–1 hour
<b>Stream Connections:</b> Walk upstream and back in time to explore the connections between streams and their environment. Learn how human activity has shifted the stream from healthy to stressed and back. Continue on for a longer hike or walk back with the ranger.	<b>Sunday, Thursday</b> 1 p.m.	Anthony Creek trailhead	1 hour
<b>Portraits from the Cove:</b> Venture up the accessible path to the John Oliver Cabin. Learn about the community that developed in Cades Cove in the 19th century and how it compared to communities elsewhere in the growing United States at the time.	<b>Tuesday, Friday</b> 9 a.m.	Second John Oliver Cabin parking lot	45 minutes–1 hour 

# THINGS TO DO IN THE SUMMERTIME

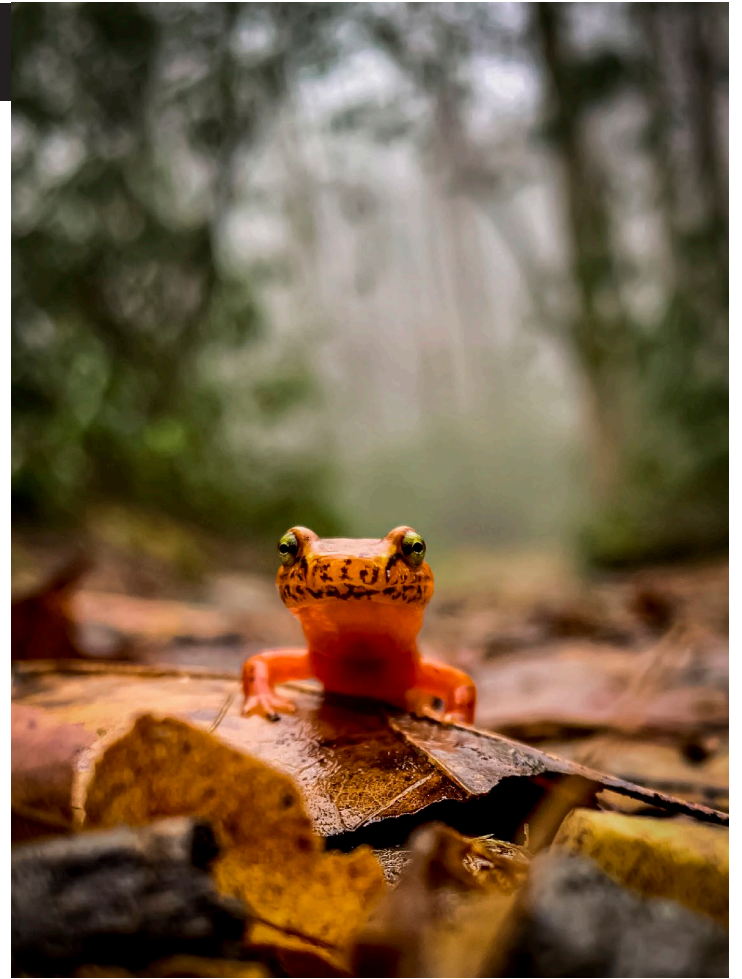
## Help protect threatened fish and salamanders

There are 2,900 miles of rivers and streams in the Smokies, which means you're never too far from the sound of flowing water or an opportunity to cool off on a hot summer's day. But these scenic waterways aren't just refreshing pitstops for hikers—they're also home to an amazing variety of wildlife including insects, crayfish, aquatic salamanders, and fish. Some species, like the Citico darter or the Smoky madtom, are federally threatened or endangered.

The best way to help protect these rare aquatic species is simple: don't move rocks. Moving rocks to create dams, channels, or cairns may seem harmless, but it can have serious consequences for animals that are sensitive to sudden changes in their environment. Moving rocks can destroy important underwater shelters or kill eggs and young.

In early summer, river chub build large stone nests on the river bottom. Several other species of fish—like central stonerollers, Tennessee shiners, or saffron shiners—also rely on these same mounds as safe spawning sites. Aquatic salamanders, too, make their homes and nests under rocks. Some species like the eastern hellbender are so rare that Smokies streams are some of the last places they can be found.

Other than leaving rocks as they are, anglers can help these fish and salamander species thrive by never using live bait in the Smokies and thoroughly cleaning boots, waders, and other fishing gear before entering park waters to avoid transporting invasive species. The stonerollers and hellbenders will thank you! *Photo by Adam Gravett.*



## Find pet-friendly trails

Pets are prohibited on most trails in Great Smoky Mountains National Park, but two exceptions are Gatlinburg Trail near Sugarlands Visitor Center in Tennessee and Oconaluftee River Trail near Oconaluftee Visitor Center in North Carolina. On these two trails, pets are welcome but should be kept on a leash no longer than six feet at all times. Pets are also allowed in frontcountry campgrounds and along roads in the Smokies but must be appropriately restrained.

If you're looking for more options nearby, consider exploring a few of the national forests surrounding the national park. Sections of Cherokee National Forest to the west and northeast of the Smokies are great options with many trails to choose from, as are Pisgah National Forest to the northeast, Nantahala National Forest to the south, and the Joyce Kilmer-Slickrock Wilderness and Citico Creek Wilderness to the west. You can also find and compare dozens of pet-friendly trails using the AllTrails app and the "dog-friendly" search filter. *Photo by Emma Oxford.*



*Check out the BARK Ranger gear available at park visitor centers!*



## Celebrating Cosby

Visitors of all ages are invited to join park rangers and special guests in Cosby on select Fridays this summer. Ranger-led programs held at the Cosby Campground amphitheater will celebrate the rich cultural and natural history of the Cosby area and explore Cherokee storytelling and dance, mountain music, moonshiners, and more.

Cosby Campground is situated along the banks of scenic Cosby Creek in a large cove shaded by hardwood forest, with a picnic area and several trailheads nearby.



*Corn was a staple crop for many farming communities in the Smokies prior to the creation of the park, and distilling this corn into whiskey, or moonshine, became a lucrative practice that remains strongly associated with Southern Appalachia. Celebrating Cosby moonshine presenters from left to right: Kelly Williamson, Digger Manes, Ranger Katie Corrigan, and Mark Ramsey. NPS photo.*

CELEBRATING COSBY	WHEN?
<b>Mountain Edge Band:</b> Traditional bluegrass music and storytelling	<b>June 21</b> 7 p.m. ♿
<b>Cherokee Storytelling and Dance:</b> Learn about Cherokee culture through story, music, and dance presented by members of the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians	<b>June 28</b> 7 p.m. ♿
<b>Honoring Those Who Serve:</b> Quilts of Valor presentation honoring service members of the past and present	<b>July 5</b> 7 p.m. ♿
<b>People of the Mountains:</b> Hear tell of what life was like living and working in Cosby before and after the creation of the park	<b>July 12</b> 7 p.m. ♿
<b>Moonshiners:</b> Distill fact from fiction as you learn about the art of making moonshine in the mountains	<b>July 19</b> 7 p.m. ♿

## Free adaptive programs and equipment check-out

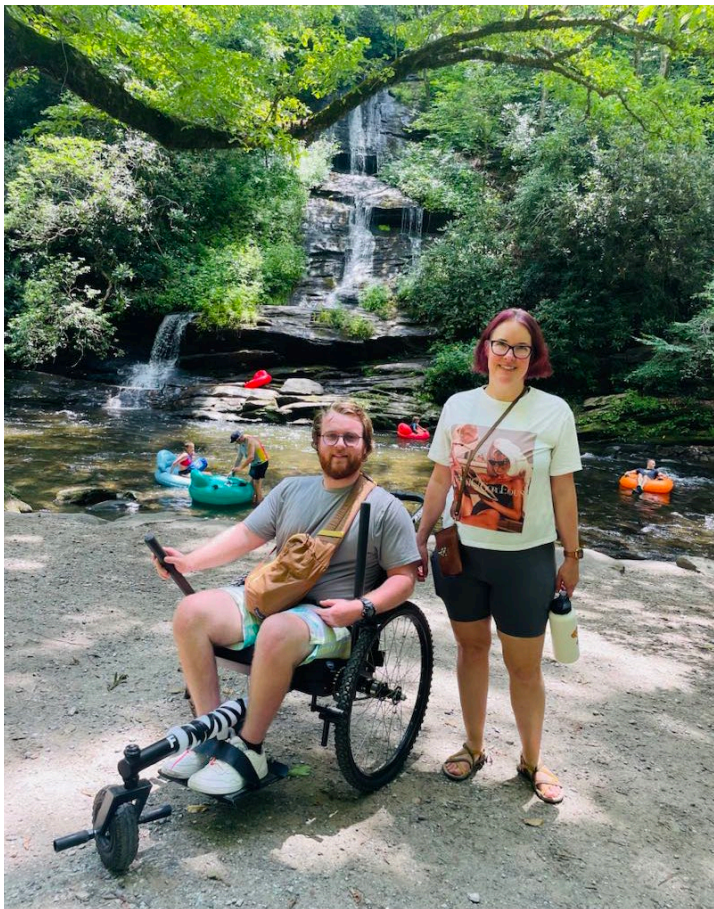
Those with physical disabilities can take advantage of free equipment rentals and an exciting series of outdoor activities in the Smokies this summer. During these ranger-led programs, participants of all abilities and their families are invited to bring their own equipment or assistive technology to hike, bike, kayak, or camp while learning about the natural and cultural history of the Smokies. Additional adaptive equipment, including off-road wheelchairs, may also be available for use.

Register for adaptive programs through Catalyst Sports, a nonprofit organization, at [catalystsports.org/great-smoky-mountain-adaptive-hike-bike](https://catalystsports.org/great-smoky-mountain-adaptive-hike-bike). **Registration is required to ensure adequate equipment and volunteer support.**

Outside of the scheduled programs, four GRIT Freedom Chairs, a type of off-road wheelchair, will be available to check out and use on park trails evaluated for the equipment, like the Little River or Deep Creek trails.

These programs and additional adaptive equipment inventory are made possible through the partnership of Catalyst Sports of Knox County, Kampgrounds of American Foundation, Friends of the Smokies, and the National Environmental Education Foundation.

SUMMER 2024 ADAPTIVE PROGRAMS	WHEN?	MEETING LOCATION	DURATION
<b>Adaptive Hike and Overnight Camping Trip</b>	<b>June 8-9</b>	Cooper Road trailhead (camping at backcountry campsite 1)	2 days ♿
<b>Adaptive Kayak</b>	<b>June 22</b>	Fontana Lake Marina	3 hours ♿
<b>Adaptive Hike and Boat Tour</b>	<b>July 14</b>	Fontana Lake Marina	3 hours ♿



*Hikers use an adaptive wheelchair to explore Deep Creek Trail near Tom Branch Falls. Photo by Catalyst Sports.*

## Parking tag purchase locations within the park

Parking tags may be purchased at locations designated by these symbols on the map:

### Automated Fee Machine (AFM)

- Available 24 hours per day
- Accepts credit/debit only
- Daily and weekly tags only

Located at Sugarlands Visitor Center, Cades Cove Loop Entrance, Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area, Newfound Gap, Oconaluftee Visitor Center, Deep Creek Picnic Area, Clingmans Dome, Greenbrier, Cosby, Big Creek, Townsend Wye, Look Rock, and Cataloochee.

### Visitor Center

- Open business hours (see page 2)
- Accepts cash or credit/debit
- Daily, weekly, and annual tags available

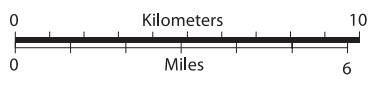
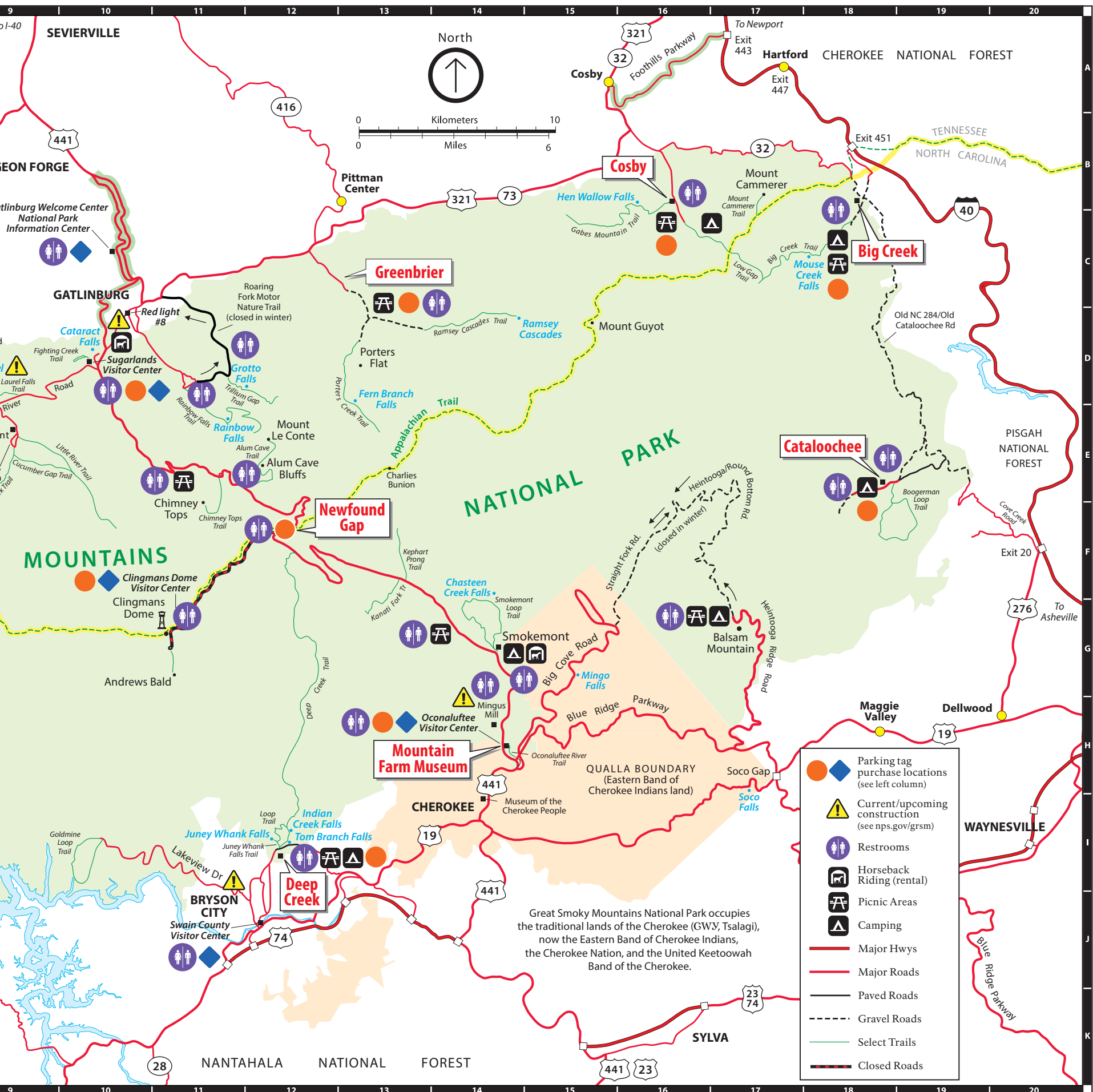
Located at Sugarlands, Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont, Cades Cove, Oconaluftee, and Clingmans Dome (closed in winter).

*Parking tags are available outside the park at Great Smokies Welcome Center in Townsend, Gatlinburg Welcome Center, Swain County Visitor Center, and select area businesses.*

**For all purchase locations, see [go.nps.gov/grsmfees](https://go.nps.gov/grsmfees).**







- Parking tag purchase locations (see left column)
- Current/upcoming construction (see nps.gov/grsm)
- Restrooms
- Horseback Riding (rental)
- Picnic Areas
- Camping
- Major Hwys
- Major Roads
- Paved Roads
- Gravel Roads
- Select Trails
- Closed Roads

Great Smoky Mountains National Park occupies the traditional lands of the Cherokee (GWS, Tsalagi), now the Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians, the Cherokee Nation, and the United Keetoowah Band of the Cherokee.

# MOUNTAINS

# NATIONAL PARK

## Mountain Farm Museum

## Big Creek

## Newfound Gap

## Deep Creek

## Greenbrier

## Cosby

## Cataloochee

## CHEROKEE

## GATLINBURG

## SEVIERVILLE

## NEON FORGE

## BRYSON CITY

## NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST

## CHEROKEE NATIONAL FOREST

## PISGAH NATIONAL FOREST

## WAYNESVILLE

## SYLVA

TENNESSEE  
NORTH CAROLINA

QUALLA BOUNDARY  
(Eastern Band of Cherokee Indians land)

Gatlinburg Welcome Center  
National Park Information Center

Sugarlands Visitor Center

Clingmans Dome Visitor Center  
Clingmans Dome

Swain County Visitor Center

Porters Flat

Smokemont

Museum of the Cherokee People

Boogeran Loop Trail

Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail (closed in winter)

Chimney Tops

Chimney Tops Trail

Andrews Bald

Deep Creek Trail

Goldmine Loop Trail

Lakeview Dr

Loop Trail

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat

Porters Flat



# THINGS TO DO IN THE SUMMERTIME, CONT.

## Hit the trail

There are more than 800 miles of maintained trails in the Smokies ranging from leisurely quiet walkways to challenging mountain ascents. Just be sure to come prepared with rain gear, layers, and plenty of water and snacks.

Download a free copy of the park's trail map at [nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm) or purchase one for \$1 at a visitor center or kiosk. Visitor center bookstores offer hiking references including *Day Hikes of the Smokies* and *Hiking Trails of the Smokies*. Photo by Michele Sons.



## Find the Smokies Most Wanted

Help scientists gather important information about plants and animals by using the free iNaturalist app while visiting the park.



## Go fishing

Cool off by a mountain stream this summer and try your hand at hooking one of the five species of game fish found in the park. The Smokies offer a wide variety of angling experiences, including about 580 miles of streams large enough to support wild trout populations. Bait is prohibited, and a North Carolina or Tennessee license is required.

Grab a free fishing map to get a lay of the land and brush up on park rules or purchase the *Fishes of the Smokies* field guide at a visitor center bookstore. Photo by Ryan Hagerty.

**1** Get the iNaturalist app  
Download the app. Log in.  
Try it out.



**2** Record life you find in the Smokies

Find a cool organism. Take photos or sound recordings. Post it to iNaturalist. Repeat.

## Secure VIP status

Looking to elevate your Smokies experience? Consider joining the Volunteer-in-Park (VIP) program! Volunteers help make the Smokies especially great by donating their time and many talents to help with anything from litter patrol and trail maintenance to campground hosting or filing records. Both individual and group VIP opportunities are available, and all volunteers are supervised by NPS staff.

Review volunteer opportunities and download a VIP application at [nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm) under "Get Involved." Completed applications can be emailed to [grsm\\_volunteer\\_office@nps.gov](mailto:grsm_volunteer_office@nps.gov). Photo by Sarah Herron.



Up for a challenge? Look for the target species (like this eastern chipmunk) in the Smokies Most Wanted guide. Find the guide and more at [dlia.org/smokiesmostwanted](https://dlia.org/smokiesmostwanted).

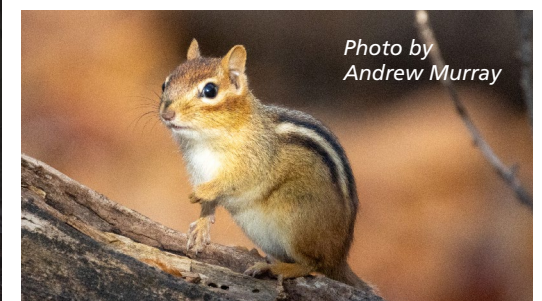


Photo by Andrew Murray





## Keep it **SMOKIES SMART**:

- S** Stay hydrated
- M** Map your hike
- A** Always wear proper clothing/footwear
- R** Remember your flashlight
- T** Turn back when conditions change

Tell someone where you're going, stay on established trails, pack the essentials, and know what to do in case of an emergency.

Let the NPS Backcountry Office help you plan and prepare for your hike.  
Call 865.436.1297,  
8 a.m.–5 p.m.

### PACK ESSENTIALS

- Navigation—map, compass, and knowledge of how to use them
- Water and food
- Extra layers
- First aid kit
- Headlamp or flashlight
- Traction support like microspikes and hiking poles
- Rain gear and pack cover or waterproof bags
- Emergency whistle
- Sun protection with sunscreen, sunglasses, and hat



### FOR A LONGER HIKE

- Repair kit with multi-tool or knife
- Fire starter
- Shelter—emergency tent or tarp

### IN AN EMERGENCY

- Call 911 if you can acquire a signal.
- Remain with any injured parties until help arrives. Use what basic first-aid techniques you know, but do not attempt invasive intervention unless you are medically trained.
- Use an emergency whistle to issue a series of three spaced blasts every few minutes to alert rescue crews. If you are in an open area, display brightly colored clothing or gear.



### YOUR CELL PHONE IS **NOT**

- a light
- a map
- a survival kit
- always going to have service

## Words with a Ranger

Continued from page 1

Early in my undergraduate studies, I discovered I could study parks, recreation, and tourism management, and I never looked back. I grew up exploring national parks and have loved salamanders, trees, and everything outdoors for as long as I can remember. After working seasonally at Glacier and Acadia national parks, I was lucky enough to land in the Smokies for a year with AmeriCorps. I loved it so much that I came back in 2022 after completing a master's degree in environmental education.

I dedicate most of my time to digital product design—in other words, determining what we share online and how it looks. We think through the many ways visitors interact with our digital resources and find ways to present information in a user-friendly way. Millions of people visit the Smokies every year, and we want to help those visitors arrive with multiple plans in mind and places to explore. Some popular parking areas fill quickly, but the Smokies offer countless options with a little preparation.

Before you hit the trail, check out the refreshed Plan Your Visit pages at [nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm). You'll find information on points of interest and hikes separated by different areas of the park. A team of incredible people—NPS employees, Smokies Life staff, interns, and more—brought this to life, and I am proud to have been part of the process. You can also download the NPS app and find two guided tours in the Smokies with much more to come as we continue to modernize our park's presence in the digital sphere.



Raccoon and dog illustration by Lisa Horstman. All others by Emma Oxford.

### LEAVE ONLY FOOTPRINTS

Writing on or carving into trees, stones, or structures can cause permanent damage—it's also a crime! Taking a photo is always a better way to remember your time in the Smokies and helps preserve the park for others too.



### BIN IT FOR THE BEARS

Help protect bears by packing out all trash and food waste and using bear-proof dumpsters in the park.



### KEEP PETS ON DESIGNATED TRAILS

Remember that the Gatlinburg Trail and Oconaluftee River Trail are the *only* pet-friendly trails in the park.

All pets must be kept on a leash no longer than six feet at all times.

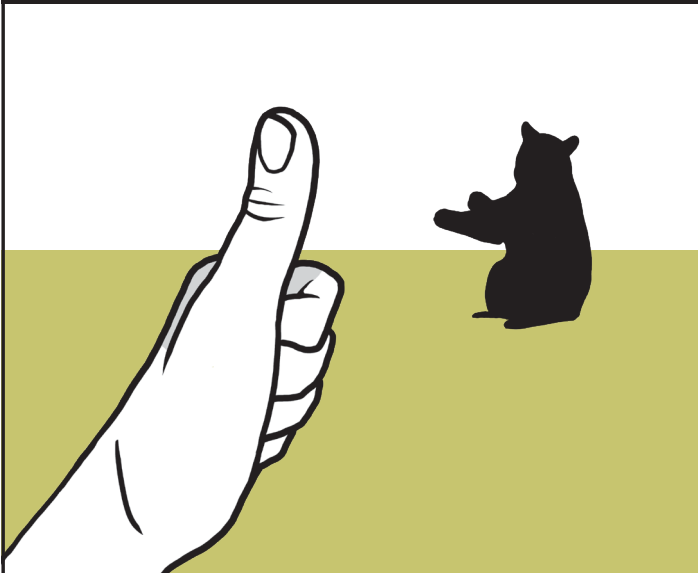




**PLEASE LEAVE YOUR FIREWOOD AT HOME**

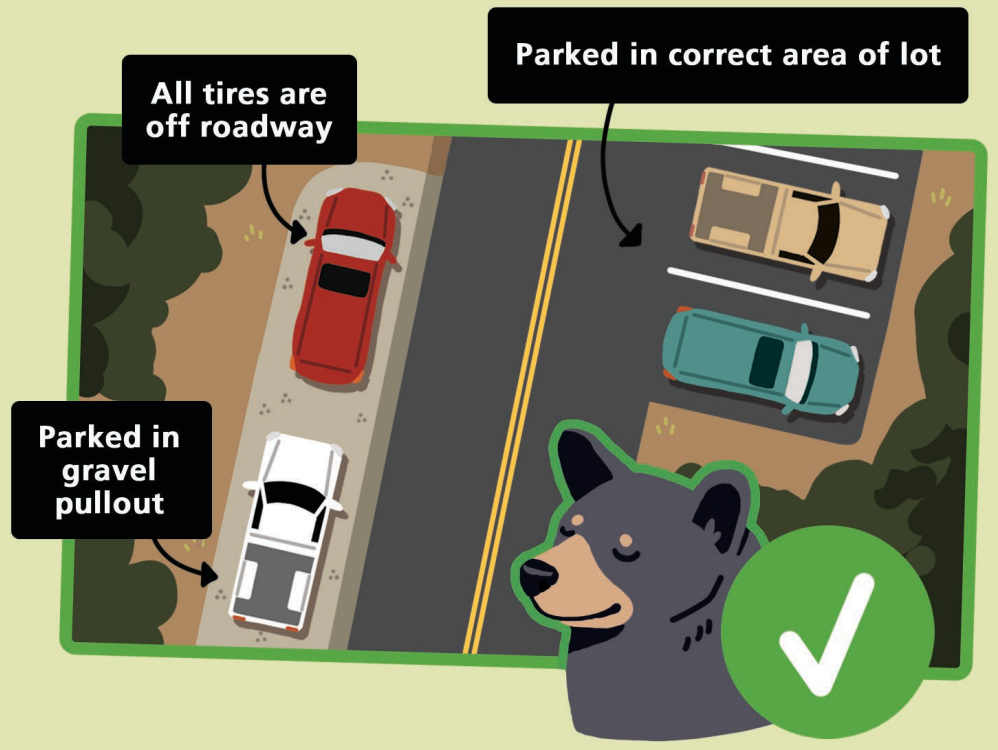
Use only heat-treated or dead and down wood within the park. Harmful pests can hitchhike into the park on your firewood, which could kill millions of trees.

**ALWAYS USE THE RULE OF THUMB**



When viewing wildlife, hold your arm out straight. If you can't cover the animal in your line of sight with your thumb, you're too close!

**PARK SAFELY IN THE SMOKIES**



# IF YOU LOVE THE SMOKIES

Join the park's nonprofit partners in helping to protect this special place for future generations

## Smokies Life



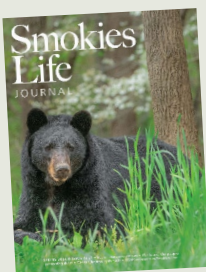
Smokies Life (formerly Great Smoky Mountains Association) brings people of all backgrounds together as advocates and stewards to honor, sustain, and protect Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Since 1953, Smokies Life has provided more than \$50 million to the park. Today, the organization operates the park's official bookstores, publishes books and other media about the Smokies, and supports the park's educational, scientific, and historical preservation efforts.

Become a Smokies Life Park Keeper today by visiting [SmokiesLife.org](http://SmokiesLife.org) or calling 888.898.9102, ext. 257.

Interested in working in the park? Smokies Life is currently hiring for retail and information desk positions with rates beginning at \$15.75/hr. Apply online at [SmokiesLife.org/employment](http://SmokiesLife.org/employment).

### Park Keepers enjoy...



- Bi-annual *Smokies Life Journal*
- *Smokies Live* e-newsletter

- Discounts at park bookstores and local businesses



- Exclusive group hikes and expert-led events



## Friends of the Smokies

Since 1993, Friends of the Smokies has raised over \$85 million to assist GSMNP in providing visitors a safe, memorable experience while protecting the park's historic and natural resources.

Every year, the park requests funding for projects and programs that would be unfulfilled without support from Friends.

Examples include:

- Trail rehabilitation
- Preservation of historic structures
- Facility repairs, upgrades, and renovations
- Accessibility improvements
- First responder equipment and training
- Educational programs for 10,000+ students
- Conservation and wildlife management

Learn more and become a 'Friend' at [FriendsOfTheSmokies.org](http://FriendsOfTheSmokies.org).



## Discover Life in America

Discover Life in America (DLiA) is devoted to cataloging every living species in the Smokies through the All Taxa Biodiversity Inventory. This ongoing project helps the National Park Service better understand and protect the 21,000 kinds of organisms documented in the Smokies, with more discovered every day.

DLiA also offers internship, volunteer, community science, and education opportunities that provide firsthand experiences in the Smokies, promote the importance of biodiversity, and foster stewardship of the natural world. Learn how you can support DLiA at [dlia.org](http://dlia.org) or call 865.430.4757.

Join the discovery!



Record life in the park with the iNaturalist app! [dlia.org](http://dlia.org)



## Tremont

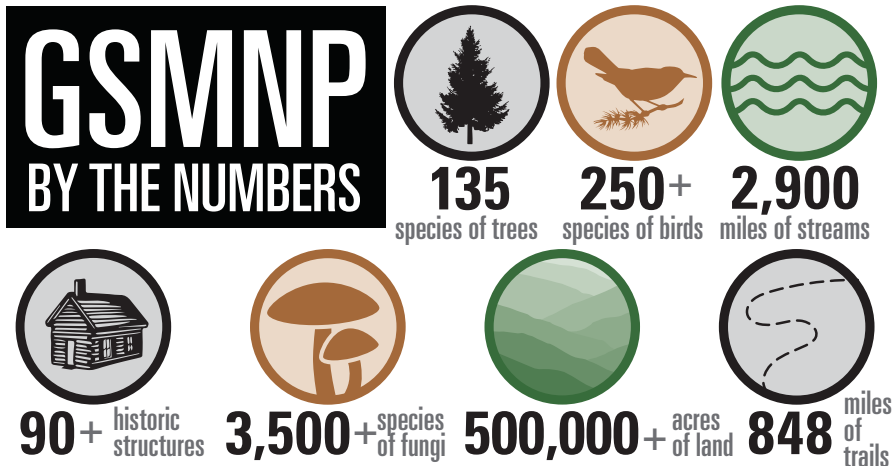
Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont offers kids and adults an opportunity to connect with nature through immersive, multi-day experiences in the national park. Through residential workshops, summer camps, and school programs, Tremont promotes curiosity and inspires learning for thousands of individuals each year.

Adult workshops include the Southern Appalachian Naturalist Certification program, photography courses, backpacking adventures, community science, and professional development for teachers.

Visit [gsmit.org](http://gsmit.org) for program information or to learn how you can support life-changing learning experiences in the Smokies. *Header photo by Rich Bryant.*

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS INSTITUTE AT TREMONT

## GSMNP BY THE NUMBERS





# DANCE

**MAKE UP A DANCE** inspired by your time in the Smokies! It can be as long or as short as you like. Practice it and share it with someone—either in person or with a recorded video.

You can also show off your dance at any of the live music events happening in the park this summer at Cades Cove's Cable Mill, Cosby Campground, and the Oconaluftee Visitor Center! See pages 5 and 7 for details.

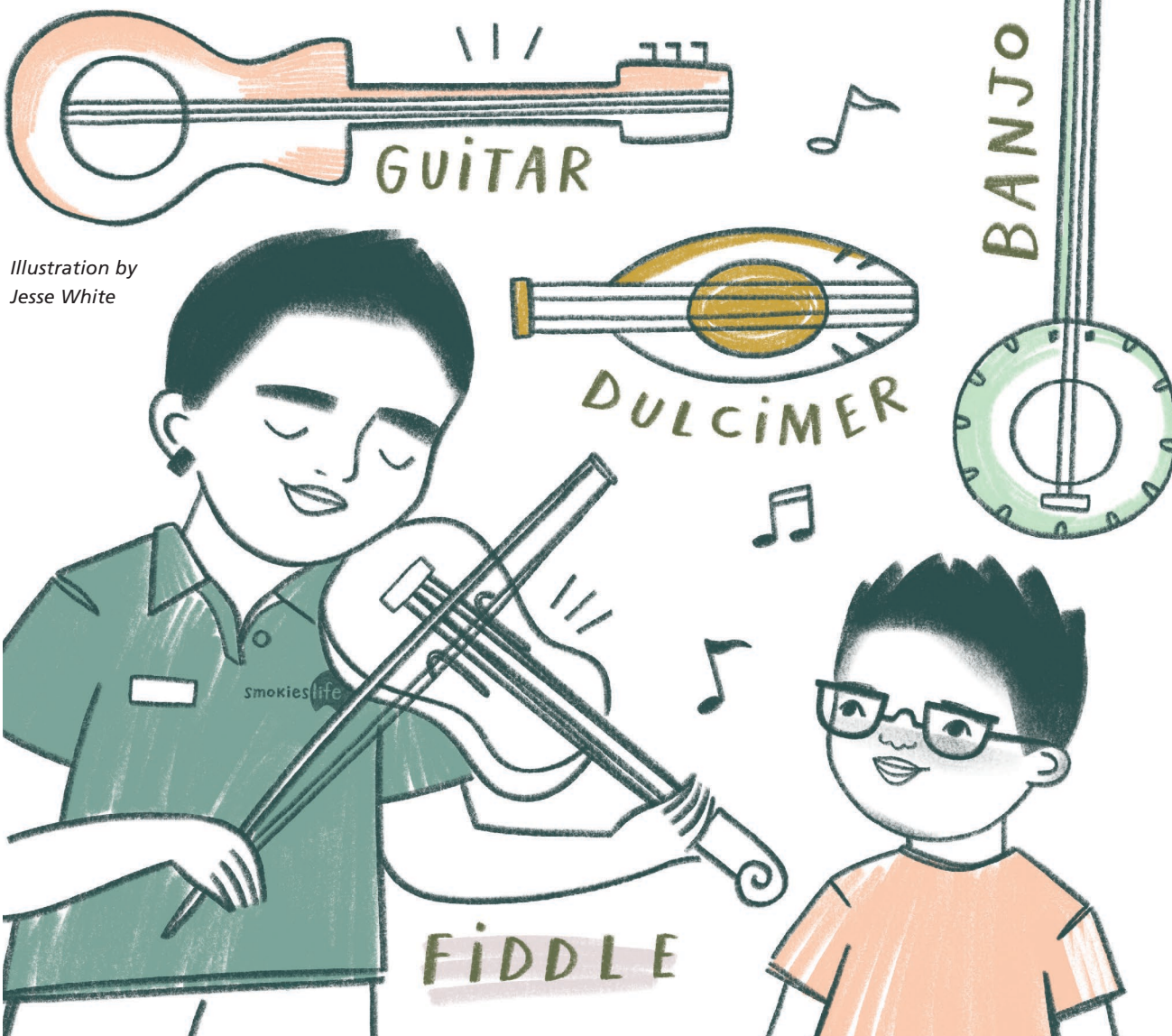
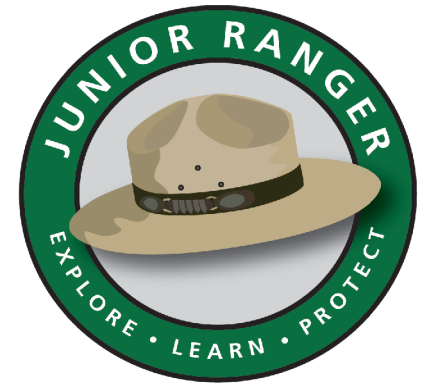


Illustration by  
Jesse White



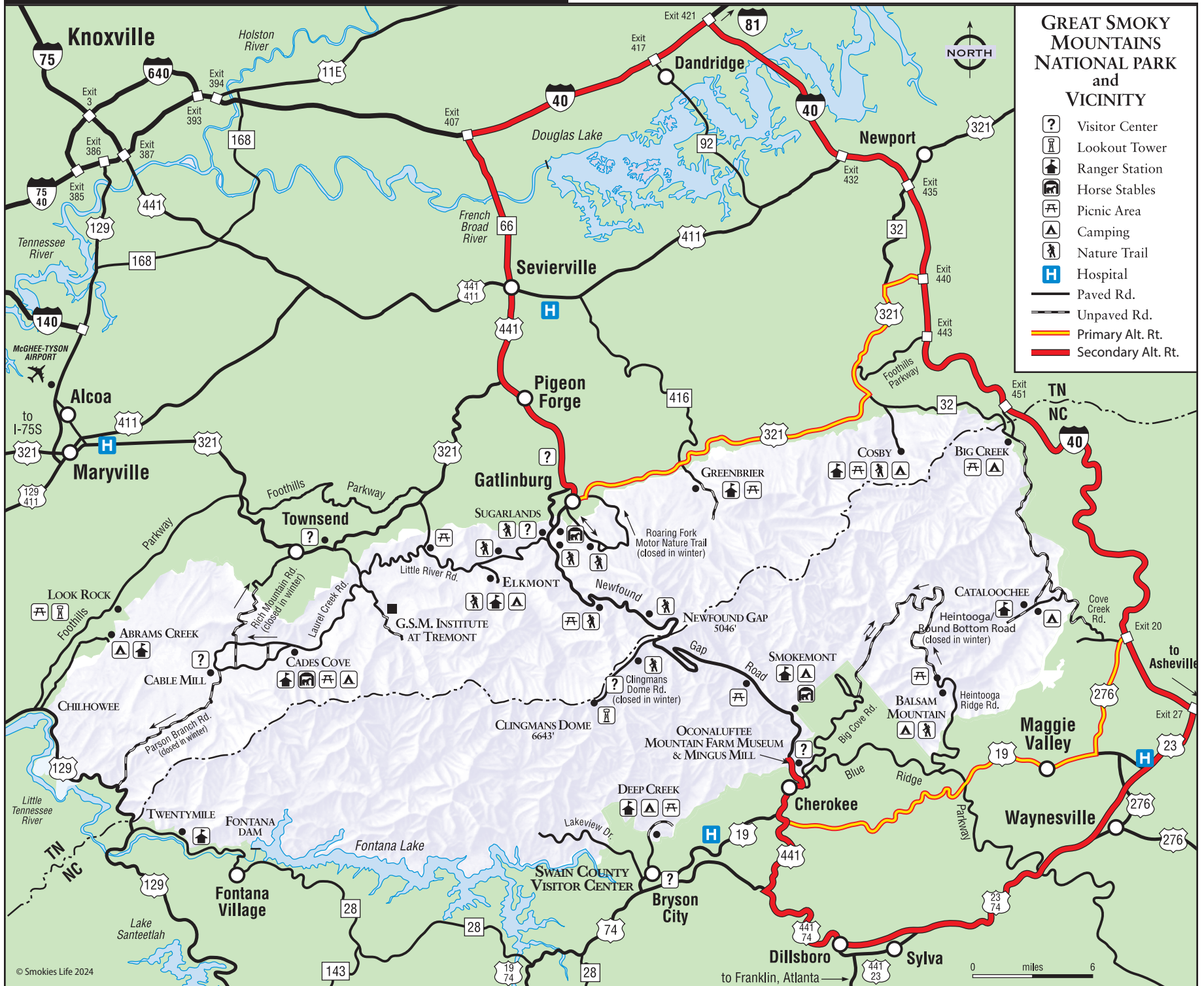
People often think of **APPALACHIAN MUSIC** as developing in isolation, but the people here were well-connected to the surrounding communities and the world beyond. Their music and dance reflect both their sense of place and the influences of Native American, African, and European musical traditions.



**THIS ACTIVITY IS ADAPTED FROM GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK'S NEW JR. RANGER ACTIVITY GUIDE! WORK AS A TEAM TO FILL OUT THE GUIDE AND EARN A JR. RANGER BADGE. AVAILABLE AT ANY PARK VISITOR CENTER!**

# SMOKIES INFORMATION

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



## Information

General park info:  
865.436.1200  
[nps.gov/grsm](https://nps.gov/grsm)

## Backcountry info:

865.436.1297  
[smokiespermits.nps.gov](https://smokiespermits.nps.gov)

## Emergencies

911  
Cherokee Police  
828.497.4131  
Gatlinburg Police  
865.436.5181

## Avoid the fine

A valid parking tag must be displayed when parked for more than 15 minutes anywhere in the park. Pets are permitted only on the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails, which allow dogs on a leash. Persons feeding wildlife are subject to a \$5,000 fine. Picking or digging plants is prohibited in the park.

## Accessibility

Restrooms at Cades Cove, Oconaluftee, and Sugarlands visitor centers are fully accessible. For more information about accessibility, go to [nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm](https://nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/accessibility.htm).