

Obed

Obed Wild and Scenic River Tennessee



Wild and scenic are good words to describe the Obed river system. The Obed Wild and Scenic River consists of sections of four streams: Daddys Creek, Clear Creek, Emory River, and the Obed River. These rivers have been running their course for centuries, cutting into the sandstone of the plateau and creating a rugged landscape of wild land and water found in relatively few places east of the Mississippi River. The Obed and its tributaries have carved spectacular gorges with cliffs rising as much as 500 feet above the water. Huge sandstone boulders, once part of the cliff face, now dot the streams and create obstacles to the water rushing by.

The Indians who first visited this area may have used the bluffs as shelter during extended hunting trips. They found the area to have abundant game, but the soil was poor and permanent settle-

ments were not developed. The longhunters were next in the area and found the same rich hunting grounds but most early pioneers found the land inhospitable, difficult to farm, and too far from the centers of commerce. The mainstream of settlement flowed around and beyond the plateau in favor of rich farm lands to the west. Development in the river gorge was discouraged by the steep bluffs and inaccessibility. The result is an area sculptured by the constant action of wind and water and generally untouched and unchanged.

Access to the park is limited. The few bridges that cross the river provide access to popular swimming holes such as Nemo, Slant Rock, and Lilly Pool. Fishermen can be found along the river attempting to catch bass, bluegill, catfish, or the Muskellunge better known as the Mucky or Jack fish. Canoeists and kayakers

can use the access areas to put in or take off. The rivers on the Obed system offer some of the most challenging and exciting whitewater in the Southeast.

The mixed forest of pine, hickory, maple, hemlock, rhododendron, mountain laurel, and azalea are full of life. During the spring wildflowers can be found on the forest floor and lining the river with splashes of color. A variety of wildlife can be found in the river gorge, including more than 100 species of birds. Along the shore you may spot bobcat, beaver, raccoon, mink, otter, or a whitetail deer.

The Obed Wild and Scenic River was added to the National Park System in October 1976. The National Park Service and the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency have joined forces to

protect this area. Through a cooperative agreement lands within the rivers boundaries that are part of the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area will continue to be owned and managed by the state of Tennessee. The goal is to preserve the river in a free-flowing condition, preserve and protect the water quality, wildlife resources, and the primitive character of the area for present and future generations.

Visitor facilities will be limited and somewhat primitive. The hope is to keep these streams and the land alongside them in a relatively unchanged state, while making it possible to reach the streams. Despite this remoteness and the present lack of development, the Obed offers you a multitude of opportunities for enjoyment. If you accept the river and the land on their own terms, they can provide rewarding memories that will last a lifetime.

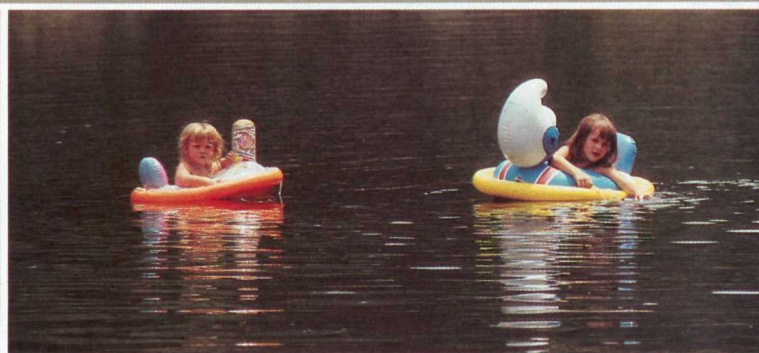
A Variety of Outdoor Pleasures



At any moment this fisherman's repose may be interrupted by a fish taking the bait.



The park's streams have many beautiful surprises, among them is this waterfall.



Nothing beats a swim on a hot summer day.



Mistflower is one of many wildflowers native to the countryside.



Picnics, one of summertime's joys, are made even more pleasant by good food and good company.



The ice, snow, and clear, cold water make a magical winter scene, a

reminder that all seasons have something to offer.

Russ Manning

Things to Do

Paddling

Canoeing and kayaking bring many people to the Obed. While there are opportunities for casual floating on quiet stretches of water, this is one of the best and most difficult whitewater regions in the eastern United States. Civilization seems a long way off here. It is one of the few remaining places in the country where waters run free and there has been little or no change in the natural sequence of events; that is one of the reasons the area was chosen to be a wild and scenic river. Because the Obed is rough country, any activity must be pursued carefully and in harmony with the land.

The cold rainy season between December and April is usually the only time the rivers are full enough for float trips. At that time, the streams can have nearly continuous rapids and dangerous currents—technical whitewater. Paddling or "running" this kind of water takes training, ex-

perience, and the right equipment. It is important to take certain precautions before making a whitewater trip:

- Always float with at least two other craft.
- Trip registration is voluntary. Registering at the visitor center helps rangers keep track of visitors and plan patrol schedules.
- Make sure a family member or friend knows where and when you plan to begin your trip and where and when you plan to get off the river.
- Wear adequate clothing of the right type to protect yourself. The water can be extremely cold and therefore extremely hazardous. A wet or dry suit is advisable in the winter or early spring.
- Permission should be obtained from the landowner if you will be using access points that cross private property.



- The river level, on all sections, can change rapidly. The risk is too great if you attempt to paddle when the water level is in the trees.
- Know the conditions in the area where you plan to paddle. There are places where it is difficult to get off the river if trouble arises.
- And there are times of the year and certain places where portaging difficult rapids may be necessary.

Canoe Clubs

For information about canoe clubs in your community and area, write to any of these organizations: American Canoe Association, Box 248, Lorton, VA 22079.

American Whitewater Affiliation, P.O. Box 321, Concord, NH 03301.

Tennessee Scenic Rivers Association, P.O. Box 3104, Nashville, TN 37219.

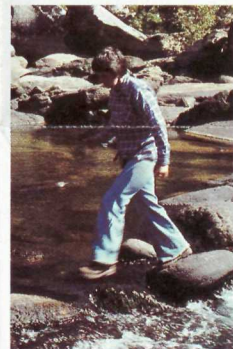
Swimming

There are a number of traditional swimming holes along the streams, and in warm weather swimming and wading can be refreshing activities at these and other places in the park. However, the river bottoms are uneven with deep holes close to the banks. These, coupled with wet, slippery rocks, can make swimming and diving hazardous. Care in selecting places to swim, knowledge of the water conditions, and never swimming alone can make

this a pleasurable and rewarding time on any of the Obed's streams.

Camping

There are no developed facilities within the boundaries of the Obed Wild and Scenic River, but you may camp along the river or at access sites. Primitive facilities are available at Frozen Head State Park, 6 miles from Wartburg, near Tenn. 62. Cumberland Mountain State Park, 8 miles south of Crossville on U.S. 127, has a developed campground. You will find private campgrounds along I-40 and in the Crossville area. Wherever you travel, carry out your litter and dispose of it properly so that you and others can continue to enjoy the beauty of the Obed and of Tennessee. Picnicking is permitted on public lands.



Russ Manning

Hiking

Although there are no developed trails within the Wild and Scenic River, hiking can be fun if you are careful and know what you are doing. Always make sure someone else knows your plans. Know your route, and be wary of the bluffs along the gorge rim. Hiking trails are being planned, but it may be some time before they are available for use. A number of old logging roads in the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area are no longer open to traffic and can now be used for hiking. See note on closures.

Hunting and Fishing

Deer, bear, turkey and small game may be hunted in season with a permit from the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. Firearms are prohibited except during hunting season when you must carry the necessary licenses and permits. A Tennessee fishing license is required to fish in the area. Trapping is prohibited within the park. For

fishing and hunting information in the Catoosa Wildlife Management Area, which has different hunting seasons than elsewhere in the state, write to the manager, 216 East Penfield, Crossville, TN 38555.

Regulations and Safety

The Obed is being preserved in ways that let nature continue its work unimpeded. Wind, water, and time have shaped this landscape. The future is dependent on you. Being careful of the land and the water will ensure that the next person may have a similar opportunity.

Non-game animals, plants, and artifacts are protected here. It is illegal to harm or remove them.

Wood ticks are prevalent in warm months, so examine yourself periodically and remove ticks before they attach themselves. Chiggers can also prove irritating.

Rattlesnakes and copperheads live here and are best left alone. Know the safety precautions for snake country. Common sense is your best protection against accidents. Make sure children realize they are in a natural area containing hazards unfamiliar to more populous areas. Remember:

clear water is not always clean water. Do not drink stream water without boiling or treating it.

Bluffs and cliffs are dangerous and can result in serious injury. Slippery, muddy rocks provide uncertain footing and can also result in injury. Be careful, because removal of an accident victim to safety and medical facilities is not an easy or quick matter.

Since this is a remote area with few roads and little traffic, protect your vehicle against the possibility of vandalism. Put valuables in the trunk and leave your vehicle locked. Park where you or a responsible person can protect your property while you enjoy the park. If at all possible have a friend drop you off and pick you up if you plan to float a section of the river.

Report vandalism to a park ranger or to the Morgan County Sheriff's Office.



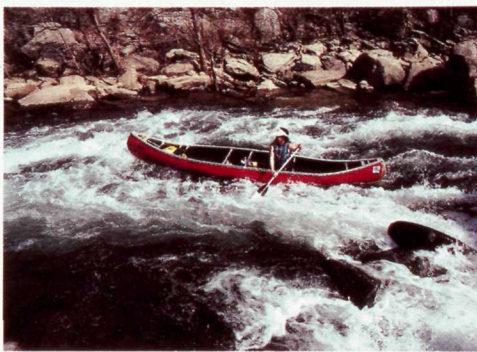
River Chart
Use the accompanying chart as you plan your trip on one of the rivers or creeks. Look at the map and determine where you would most like to put in and take out. Then, by checking this chart, you can see the distance that you will have to travel and the degree of difficulty of that section. Planning your trip in advance may offset an unforeseen problem and make your trip memorable for the right reasons.

| | Distance | Average Difficulty* | Maximum Difficulty** | Flow (in cubic feet per second) | | |
|--|---------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---------|---------|
| | | | | Minimum | Optimum | Maximum |
| Obed-Emory Adams Bridge to Potters Ford | 4 mi./6 km. | III | IV | 1000 | 3000 | 5000 |
| Potters Ford to Obed Junction | 12 mi./19 km. | II | III | 1000 | 3000 | 5000 |
| Obed Junction to Clear Creek Jct. | 4 mi./6 km. | III | IV | 500 | 1500 | 3000 |
| Clear Creek Jct. to Nemo Bridge | 5 mi./8 km. | II | III | 500 | 1500 | 3000 |
| Clear Creek U.S. 127 Bridge to Barnett Bridge | 20 mi./32 km. | II | III | 1500 | 2500 | 5000 |
| Barnett Bridge to Jett Bridge | 5 mi./8 km. | II | II | 500 | 2500 | 4000 |
| Jett Bridge to Lilly Bridge | 2 mi./3 km. | II | III | 800 | 2500 | 4000 |
| Lilly Bridge to Clear Creek/Obed River Jct. | 2 mi./3 km. | III | IV | 1000 | 2500 | 3000 |
| Daddys Creek Devils Breakfast Table to Obed Jct. | 2 mi./3 km. | II | II | 700 | 1500 | 3000 |

Notes to Chart
*Average difficulty indicates degree of difficulty of a section of river at optimum flow.
**Maximum difficulty indicates the highest rated rapid in that section of the river at optimum flow. Flow information on most streams in East Tennessee is available from TVA. Call 800-238-2264 and listen to the "Emory at Oakdale" recording for information on the current flow.

Further Information
Obed Wild and Scenic River is managed by the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior, and by the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency. For more information write to one of these addresses: Manager, Obed Wild and Scenic River, P.O. Box 429, Wartburg, TN 37887; or Manager, Catoosa Wildlife Management Area, 216 East Penfield, Crossville, TN 38555.

For topographic quadrangle maps produced by the U.S. Geological Survey, guide books, and other information, contact either the National Park Service or the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency.



Traveling to the Park
The Obed is in central East Tennessee. From Nashville and west, take I-40 to U.S. 127 north. From Knoxville and east take I-40 to U.S. 27 north. Both U.S. 27 and 127 run north and south and connect with Tenn. 62 that skirts the northern edge of the area. Cross-country buses and scheduled airlines serve both Knoxville and Nashville where rental cars are available. No rail passenger service is within easy distance.

Area Closures
Catoosa Wildlife Management Area is closed to visitors every February and March to minimize impact on roads, environment, and wildlife. The area is also closed to all except hunters during the big game hunts in the fall and spring.

