

Shenandoah

NATIONAL PARK • VIRGINIA



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
Oscar L. Chapman, *Secretary*
NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
Newton B. Drury, *Director*

Shenandoah NATIONAL PARK

The Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia are famed for their scenic loveliness, romantic setting, and historical association. In the heart of these lofty mountains is the Shenandoah National Park. Its majestic tree-covered peaks reach elevations of more than 4,000 feet above the sea. Much of the time these peaks are softened by a faint blue haze from which the mountains get their name. From the highway and trails which closely follow the crest of the ridge, unforgettable panoramas spread out in every direction. Shenandoah, an Indian name, is reputed to mean "Daughter of the Stars."

Shenandoah is one of a group of areas in the National Park System known simply as national parks. These areas of outstanding scenic, scientific, or historical character are set aside for preservation in their natural state and for the inspiration and enjoyment of the people.

The park comprises more than 300 square miles of the highest and most scenic section of the Blue Ridge Range. It extends from Front Royal on the north to the vicinity of Waynesboro on the south, a distance of 75 miles.

The Blue Ridge Mountains, running generally in a northeast-southwesterly direction, rise abruptly from the Shenandoah Valley floor, forming a western escarpment and reaching a maximum elevation of 4,049 feet at Hawksbill Mountain. The rise on the Piedmont, or eastern side, is more gradual, and numerous spur ridges and foothills extend eastward from the crest of the range. Between these spur ridges, deep forested hollows are drained by turbulent mountain streams which form waterfalls of varying heights. Many of the hollows and ridges may be reached by trail.

The profusion of wildflowers and plants in spring and summer and the autumn color display of unsurpassed beauty and vividness are outstanding natural attractions.

Historical Background

The Shenandoah region is rich in historical lore, some of which predates the founding of the United States.

The first record of exploration tells of the westward journey of John Lederer in 1669. In 1716, Governor Spotswood and his Knights of the Golden Horseshoe, seeking an answer to the mystery of the great western lands, penetrated the Blue Ridge and crossed through the park, probably at Swift Run Gap. Soon afterward the mountain hollows on the east side of the ridge were settled, mostly by pioneers from the seaboard. Similarly, emigrants from the north filtered southward through the Great Valley of Virginia, and many of them carved out homesites on the western slopes.

The Shenandoah Valley became an artery of critical importance during the War between the States. General Jackson's valley campaign is recognized as a superb example of military tactics. The mountain gaps within the park were strategically important and were used frequently during these campaigns.

The idea for a national park in the Southern Appalachian Mountains originated in the early 1920's. In succeeding years, the State and people of Virginia, together with public-spirited conservationists from other parts of the United States, purchased 176,430 acres of Blue Ridge Mountain lands. This area was deeded to the Federal Government for administration and development as a national park in 1935. President Franklin D. Roosevelt dedicated Shenandoah National Park at Big Meadows on July 3, 1936. Since then, additions of other lands, purchased partly with Federal funds, bring the total to nearly 194,000 acres now in Federal ownership.

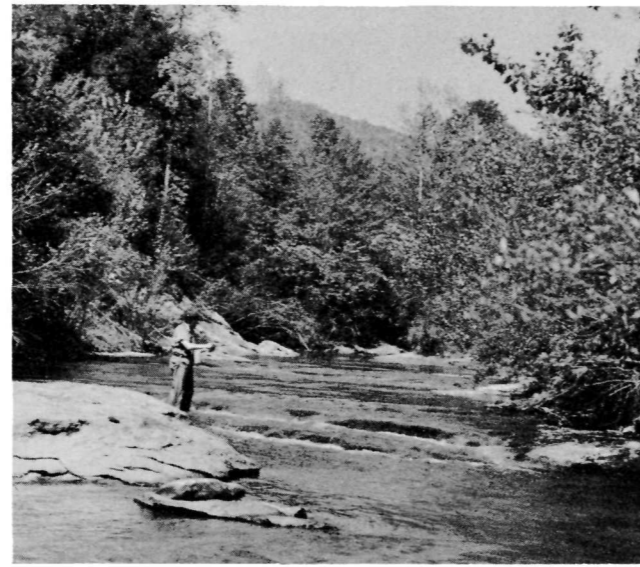
Natural Features

Forests.—Eighty-five percent of the park supports a forest cover which is predominantly oak. Most of the remaining area is meadowland.

In addition to several kinds of oaks, there are hickories, black locusts, black gums, American chestnuts, maples, American lindens, and walnuts. Along stream courses may be found birches, tuliptrees, American sycamores, and elms. There are a number of evergreens, including pine, red spruce, Canada hemlock, eastern redcedar, Canada yew, and bracted balsam fir.

The Drive, for the most part, passes through forests which prefer moist soil. The most notable exception is the dry-soil forest in the south section of the park. The characteristically dwarfed appearance of the deciduous trees overtopped by pine serves to distinguish the dry-soil forest from the moist-soil forest which predominates in the park.

Trout fishing in many of the park streams is especially good



Certain sections of the park support a variety of shrubs. Notable among these are the azalea, the wild sweet crabapple, and the hawthorn which bloom in May, followed by the ninebark, Jersey-tea, and the sumac of summer. During late May and June the mountain-laurel transforms whole mountainsides into a mass of bloom.

Trees with a profusion of conspicuous blossoms include cherry, eastern redbud, flowering dogwood, tuliptree, American chestnut, and black locust.

As they bloom and leaf out, the deciduous trees produce a pageant of color in the spring which is surpassed only by the vivid tints of autumn. Usually the fall colors reach their height between October 10 and 20.

Wildflowers.—One of the outstanding natural attractions of the park is the profusion of wildflowers which bloom everywhere from mid-April to early November. It is not uncommon during the summer to identify as many as 80 different species of blooming plants in the course of a single day's trip.

Masses of violets, bluets, marshmarigold, golden groundsel, trillium, and field hawkweed of spring give way to yarrow, eastern columbine, wild carrot, common vipersbugloss, cohosh, oxeyedaisy, black-eyed-susan, fireweed, milkweeds, snapweeds, and the turkscap lily of summer. In autumn, the goldenrod, asters, ironweeds, and the witchhazel are conspicuous, together with the brightly colored fruits of flowering dogwood, white baneberry, jack-in-the-pulpit, sumac, and common winterberry.

Several comparatively rare plants grow in the park. These include gentians, purple trillium, beadlilies, fringe-orchids, wood lilies, and cardinalflowers. The very fact that these plants are conspicuous and attractive has contributed to their virtual extinction in many places through thoughtless picking by careless individuals. *Please leave the wildflowers for others to enjoy.*

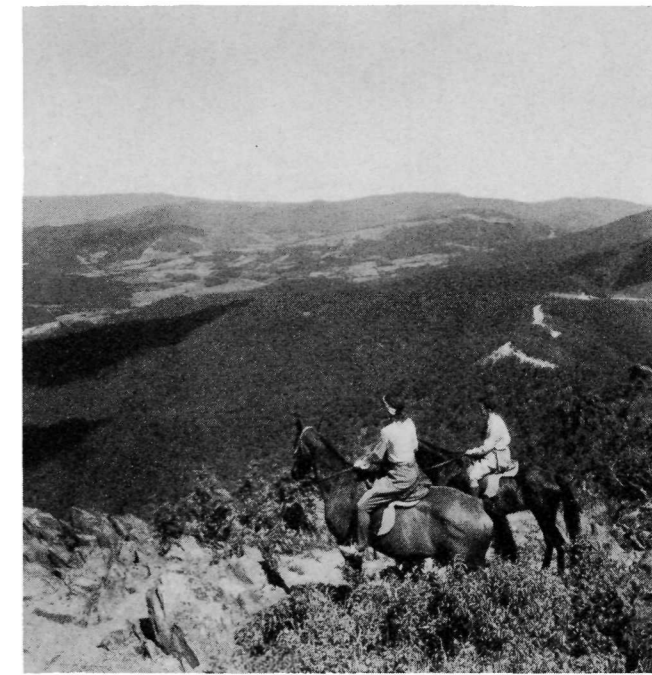
Wildlife.—About 35 different kinds of mammals are known to inhabit Shenandoah. Frequently visitors see gray squirrels, chipmunks, groundhogs or woodchucks, cottontail rabbits, and skunks. White-tail deer are increasing. Signs of black bear have been noted. National parks are wildlife sanctuaries; hunting and trapping are prohibited.

More than 170 kinds of birds have been observed in the park. Ravens, crows, vultures, and hawks will be seen by every visitor. Those who seek the solitude of the woods are likely to find eastern ruffed grouse, wild turkey, scarlet tanagers, cardinals, bluejays, sparrows, warblers, woodpeckers, and a host of others.

Lizards, snapping turtles, box turtles, and about 13 species of snakes represent the reptilian population of the park. Two of the snakes are poisonous—the timber rattlesnake and the copperhead. Visitors who remain on the established trails need have little fear of accidental encounters with snakes.

A number of fish species may be found in the streams, but only brook trout and smallmouth bass are of interest to fishermen.

There is a wealth of butterflies and moths, beetles, and other



Seeing the park from the trails

insects, but the area is singularly free of mosquitoes.

Information concerning checklists of flora and fauna of the park may be secured from park rangers or at park headquarters.

Earth History.—Persons interested in the story of the formation of the hills and valleys and of the rocks and minerals composing them will find much to command their attention in Shenandoah National Park. They will recognize the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains as a remnant of a once vast plain which extended from the mountain ridges to the west toward the strand line of the sea. The carving of the mountains and valleys out of this plain is one of the later chapters in the earth history of this area. The visitor may also recognize in the greenstone rocks of these mountains the great age of these earlier formations, which have been so changed by heat and pressure as to obliterate all trace of their original appearance.

The folded rock strata reveal the magnitude of the forces which wrinkled and broke the earth's crust, causing an overlap for several miles. These and many other geological features reveal a long and complex record of earth events.

Park Season

Shenandoah National Park is open to visitors all year. However, the majority of lodging and restaurant facilities are closed during the winter and early spring months. Panorama and Swift Run Crossroads usually remain open on a reduced scale the year-round. All types of accommodations may be obtained in towns near the park.

5. Securing a permit from a park ranger before building fires or making camp, except in designated picnic and campground areas where fireplaces are provided.

6. Walking on designated trails and paths, since short cuts destroy the plant life and cause erosion. Signs have been placed at intersections on established trails to indicate directions.

7. Protecting all wildlife, since the park is an absolute sanctuary. Unless adequately sealed, cased, broken down, or otherwise packed to prevent their use while in the park, firearms are prohibited, except upon written permission from the superintendent.

8. Consulting a park ranger at any of the entrances for the special regulations governing fishing, if you plan to fish in park waters.

9. Keeping dogs and cats on leash, or otherwise under restrictive physical control, at all times while in the park.

What To Do

Motoring.—The Drive, a scenic highway, traverses the entire length of the park along the crest of the mountains for a distance of 105 miles. This park highway intersects U S 211 at Thornton Gap, U S 33 at Swift Run Gap, and U S 250 at Rockfish Gap.

Parking overlooks, at intervals along the Drive, afford the motorist an opportunity to stop and enjoy the breath-taking panoramas. To the west lies the eastern section of the historic Shenandoah Valley, with the meandering South Fork of the Shenandoah River, its green and brown patchwork fields, and small woodlands. The Massanutten Range is immediately beyond and the main Allegheny Range melts into the far horizon. To the east lies the Piedmont Plateau with numerous forested foothills becoming ever smaller in the distance.

During heavy storms and fog, the Drive may be closed to motor traffic for short periods. Signs are posted at park entrances when hazardous driving conditions prevail.

The lodges, waysides, campgrounds, picnic grounds, and trails, provided for the convenience of visitors, may all be reached from the Drive.

Hiking.—Shenandoah's trail system leads to streams and waterfalls, along ridges into hollows, to cliffs and mountain tops where some of the most beautiful scenery is to be found.

Following the crest of the Blue Ridge through the park is a 94-mile graded trail. This main trail is a designated section of the Appalachian Trail, a marked pathway extending 2,050 miles from Maine to Georgia. The trail crosses the Drive at several points and is accessible from many of the parking overlooks. Short side trail trips may be taken to more remote sections of the park.

Maps of the trails are available from the Potomac Appalachian Trail Club, Inc., Washington, D. C. There is a separate one for each of the park sections; namely, north, central, and south. Detailed trail data and much useful information for hikers and campers in the park are also published by the Trail Club.

For overnight hikers there are several shelters (locked cabins), provided with bunks, mattresses, blankets, cooking utensils, and other necessities. They are operated by the Trail Club, and reservations are required in advance. A small charge is made.

Open shelters (three-sided structures containing bunks, with an outdoor fireplace for heating and cooking), for the benefit of hikers only, are located at convenient intervals along the Appalachian Trail and at other points in the park. There is no charge for their use: first come, first served. Shelters must be shared with other parties. The usual rules of trail etiquette are observed by occupants of the shelters in caring for the structures and surroundings. A supply of dry wood should always be left inside.

Permits must be obtained in person from a park ranger if fires are to be built in other than the fireplaces provided in the established camp and picnic areas. Campfire permits are not issued during fire season.

Saddle horses may be rented at Skyland in summer and early fall. Overnight pack trips or short rides by the hour or day may be arranged.

Naturalist Service.—During the summer season a varied program of nature walks and other guided trips is offered. From May through October illustrated evening talks on natural or human history are given at frequent intervals. These activities, directed by the park naturalist, originate at both Skyland and Big Meadows areas and are free to the public. Complete information on naturalist schedules is available at the checking stations, concession units, and other public places.

Photographing.—Though haze sometimes makes special equipment necessary to secure clear landscapes, interesting pictures of mountain peaks, ridges, hollows, and other natural features may be obtained. Pictures and film are on sale at the various gift shops in the park.

Picnicking.—The six free picnic grounds are complete with parking space, tables, fireplaces, water, and comfort stations.

Camping.—The fine campground located at Big Meadows has all the facilities of the picnic grounds, plus individual campsites for tent and trailer campers, and a combined laundry and shower building. Electricity is not available. At Lewis Mountain there are similar camping facilities. Camping is free with use limited to 30 days during the heavy travel season from May 15 to Labor Day.

Campers and picnickers should bring camp stoves or fuel for fireplaces since wood is not always available. Camp stoves, charcoal burners, and fuel may be obtained at all service stations.

Fishing.—Excellent fishing for brook trout is to be found in many of the streams of the park. A Virginia State fishing license is required. Fishermen should secure a copy of the special regulations governing fishing in park waters from a park ranger or at the superintendent's office. Generally, the season extends from April 20 to July 10.

Skiing.—From January to mid-March, snow conditions are sometimes ideal for skiing. The area east of Pinnacles Picnic Grounds offers steep downhill runs as well as gentle slopes for novices.

Points of Interest along Drive

Read Down—South Read Up—North

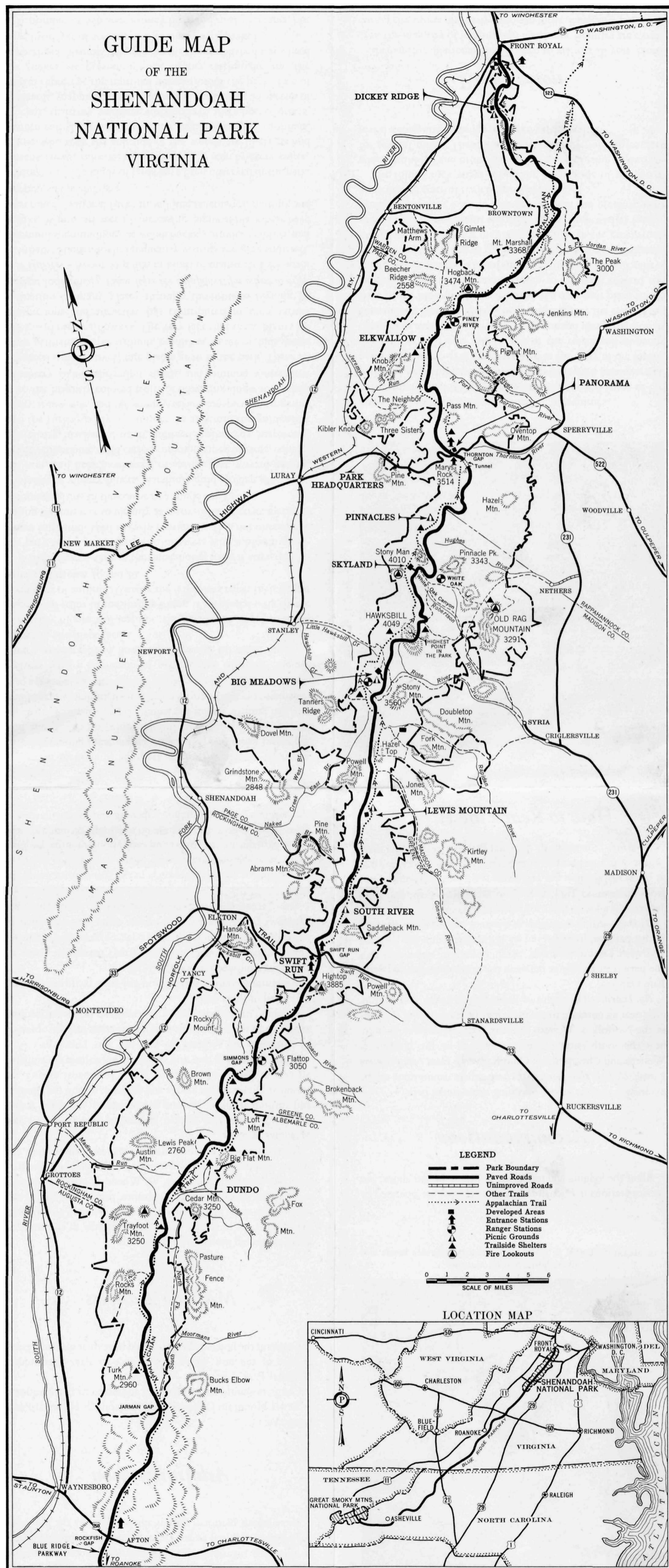
Miles	Elevation	Place	Miles
NORTH ENTRANCE			
0.0	595	Junction Va. Route 12 and the Drive.	31.5
0.5	705	North Entrance Station—Information.	31.0
4.6	1,940	Dickey Ridge Lodge—Meals, souvenirs, gas and oil; cabins; free picnic grounds nearby, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station.	26.9
20.9	3,385	Hogback Parking Overlook—Highest point on Drive in north section. 7 bends in Shenandoah River visible on clear day.	10.6
22.3		Piney River Ranger Station—Information.	9.2
24.0	2,445	Elkwallow Wayside—Light lunch, souvenirs, gas and oil; free picnic grounds nearby, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station.	7.5
31.5	2,300	Thornton Gap (north), Panorama Crossroads—Meals, souvenirs, gas and oil, comfort station. Entrance Station—Information; intersection with U S 211 (Lee Highway).	0.0

THORNTON GAP ENTRANCE

0.0	2,300	Thornton Gap (south), Entrance Station—Information.	34.2
0.7	2,510	Marys Rock Tunnel and Tunnel Parking—Overlook.	33.5
5.2	3,350	Pinnacles Picnic Grounds—Free tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station.	29.0
10.3	3,680	Entrance Skyland Cabin Area—Highest point on the Drive. 1/2 mile to cabin area. Cabins, meals, souvenirs, gas and oil, comfort station, saddle horses.	23.9
19.8	3,500	Big Meadows Wayside—Lunches, souvenirs, gas and oil, comfort station. 1 mile west to Big Meadows Lodge—Meals, lodging, souvenirs, tennis; free picnic grounds, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station; free campground for tents and trailers, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station, laundry and shower. Ranger Station—Information.	14.4
26.1	3,390	Lewis Mountain Lodge—Cabins, meals; free picnic grounds, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station; free campground for tents and trailers, tables, fireplaces, water, comfort station.	8.1
33.0	2,680	Entrance Station, Swift Run Gap (north)—Information.	1.2
34.2	2,365	Swift Run Gap, intersection with U S 33, Spotswood Trail.	0.0

SWIFT RUN GAP ENTRANCE

0.0	2,365	Swift Run Gap (south)—Swift Run Crossroads—Meals, cabins, souvenirs, gas and oil, comfort station. Entrance Station—Information.	39.7
7.6	2,245	Simmons Gap Ranger Station—Information.	32.1
15.6	2,860	Big Run Parking Overlook—View of large watershed in park. Entrance foot trail to Big Run open shelter.	24.1
18.2	2,785	Dundo Picnic Area (temporary)—Tables, comfort station.	21.5
24.4	2,730	Calvary Rocks Parking Area—Entrance foot trail to Rocks Mountain and Rip Rap Shelter.	15.3
31.2	2,175	Jarman Gap—Informal picnicking, tables.	8.5
38.9	2,070	South Entrance Station—Information.	0.8
39.7	1,910	Rockfish Gap, intersection with U S 250, Jefferson Highway. Blue Ridge Parkway continues south from this point. Inquire at Entrance Station as to sections completed.	0.0



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How to Reach the Park

By Auto.—Shenandoah National Park is accessible via main highway at four points—from State Highways 12, 55, and 522 at Front Royal; from Lee Highway, U S 211, at Thornton Gap; from Spotswood Trail, U S 33, at Swift Run Gap; and from Jefferson Highway, U S 250, at Rockfish Gap.

By Bus.—All of the points of entrance mentioned in the foregoing paragraph are served by regular schedule of Virginia Trailways. During the travel season, bus service operates within the park over the Drive between the north entrance and Swift Run Gap.

By Train.—The towns of Front Royal, Luray, and Elkton, each near an entrance to the park, may be reached over the lines of the Norfolk & Western Railway. The city of Waynesboro, near the south entrance, may be reached by the Norfolk & Western and Chesapeake & Ohio Railways. *Local transportation is available from these points to the park*, where connections can be made with the bus service operating through the park.

Accommodations

All of the lodging and restaurant facilities, the gift shops, and service stations in Shenandoah National Park are operated by

Big Meadows Lodge at 3,500 feet elevation provides meals and overnight accommodations



the Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc. Opening and closing dates vary from season to season. There are no overnight accommodations in the park during the winter and early spring months. Lodging facilities in the park are limited, but there is a wide choice of cabins, tourist homes, and hotels in the communities near the park.

Hotel accommodations are available in the park only at Big Meadows Lodge. Rooms, with private connecting bath, may be rented in cabins at Dickey Ridge Lodge, Skyland, Big Meadows, Lewis Mountain Lodge, and Swift Run Crossroads. There are no cabins equipped for housekeeping.

Restaurant, counter service, and gift shop facilities are available at all of these units.

As rates change from season to season, no prices for facilities are given in this folder, but that information may be obtained by writing to the Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., Luray, Va.

Counter service, gift shop, and service station facilities are available all year at Panorama and Swift Run Crossroads; during the season at Dickey Ridge Lodge and Skyland; during the summer and autumn at Elkallow and Big Meadows Waysides. A store providing staple food supplies for campers is operated at Big Meadows Wayside.

Reservations for accommodations may be secured from the nearest concessioner unit or by writing or telegraphing the Virginia Sky-Line Co., Inc., Luray, Va. Whenever possible, lodging reservations should be made in advance, particularly during the period from early July to early September. Visitors are urged to plan their trips to the park during the middle of the week to avoid congested periods over week ends.

Mailing Address

Guests at the hotels or lodges should have their mail addressed in care of the unit where they expect to stay, Shenandoah National Park, Luray, Va.

Campers should have their mail addressed to Big Meadows or Lewis Mountain Campground, Shenandoah National Park, Luray, Va.

Administration

Shenandoah National Park is administered by the National Park Service, United States Department of the Interior. Communications regarding the park should be addressed to the Superintendent, Shenandoah National Park, Luray Va. The administrative offices are located at park headquarters on the Lee Highway (U S 211), 4 miles west of Thornton Gap.



The falls in White Oak Canyon may be reached by a well-graded foot trail

Welcome to Visitors

This is your park, and while we of the National Park Service have been commissioned to protect it in its natural state for all to enjoy, we ask you to assist us in fulfilling our duty of enforcing park regulations by:

1. Leaving everything as you find it. Wildflowers are one of our greatest attractions; it is unlawful to pick them.

2. Driving carefully. Traffic signs will aid you. If you have an accident, report it to a park ranger. Parking areas are placed at the most scenic spots. Maximum speed is 35 miles per hour.

For automobiles and motorcycles the entrance fee is 25 cents for a 1-day permit, or \$1 for a calendar-year permit; for house trailers, 25 cents additional for 1-day permit and \$1 additional for calendar-year permit. The fee for commercial busses is \$5 for a one-trip permit, plus the usual 25 cents entrance fee.

3. Using receptacles at all parking and picnic areas for paper and lunch refuse. Picnic grounds are equipped with fireplaces, tables, water, and comfort stations for your convenience. Please do not throw trash from your car while driving through the park.

4. Using the fireplaces in the campgrounds and picnic areas, since FIRE is the arch enemy of your park. Burning matches and tobacco will start fires too, so dispose of them safely by using the ash tray in your car; when hiking, grind them out on a rock or in wet soil.

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