

Blue Ridge Parkway

North Carolina/Virginia
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior



View of parkway from Doughton Park, North Carolina

William A. Baker

The Blue Ridge Parkway extends 469 miles along the crests of the southern Appalachians and links two eastern national parks—Shenandoah and Great Smoky Mountains.

Parkway Information

How to Use This Folder The major points of interest along the parkway are listed at the right by milepost from the northern end in Virginia to the southern end in North Carolina. In this column, for the length of this folder, are informational notes pertaining to the entire parkway. A chart with visitor services is in the middle of this folder.

Trees are everywhere. In spring, tuliptrees and serviceberry produce showy blooms. In fall, leaves burst into color. Dogwood, sourwood, and blackgum turn deep red. Tuliptree and birches turn yellow, sassafras a vivid orange, and red maples add a multi-colored brilliance. Mountain ash berries turn bright red and provide food for wintering birds. Oaks put on a dash of russet and maroon. Evergreens include Virginia pine, white pine, hemlock, spruce, and fir.

10.7 Ravens Roost offers vistas of Torrey Mountain and Shenandoah Valley to the west.

Parkway Highlights in Virginia

Mile 0 Rockfish Gap near Waynesboro, Virginia, is the northern end of the Blue Ridge Parkway. To the north the parkway connects directly to Skyline Drive, which winds 105 miles through Shenandoah National Park. U.S. 250 and I-64 take you to Charlottesville to the east and Staunton to the west.

5 to 9.3 Humpback Rocks has a self-guiding trail through a collection of old Appalachian farm buildings. A hiking trail from the parking area (at mile 6.1) leads 0.75 mile to The Rocks, whose humped appearance gives the area its name. Greenstone self-guiding trail (8.8).



Tuliptree



Dogwood



Mountain ash



Birches

16 Sherando Lake is a recreation area in George Washington National Forest 4.5 miles from the parkway via Va. 814. Swimming, picnicking, and camping. Fees charged.

29 Whetstone Ridge provided many a mountain man with a fine-grained sharpening stone.

34.4 Yankee Horse Ridge supposedly is where a hard-riding Union soldier's horse fell and had to be shot. See a reconstructed spur of an old logging railroad by walking to Wigwam Falls.

58 to 63.6 Otter Creek runs 10 miles down the Blue Ridge to the James River. Otter Lake (63.1), fishing, trail.

63.8 James River and the Kanawha Canal is where a footbridge leads across the river to the restored canal locks and exhibits. A self-guiding trail follows the river bluff.

71 Petites Gap is named for a local family. The road to the west goes to Cave Mountain Lake, seven miles away, in Jefferson National Forest. Swimming, picnicking, camping.

79.7 Onion Mountain's short loop trail leads through rhododendron and mountain laurel.



Rhododendron



Trillium



Fire pink



Day flower



Pink lady's slipper



Crested dwarf iris



Mountain laurel



Trout lily



Indian paintbrush

83.4 Fallingwater Cascades can be seen along a 1.6-mile loop trail.

84 to 87 Peaks of Otter's spectacular views have been popular since the days of Thomas Jefferson. A shuttle bus provides service to Sharp Top. Fee charged.

114.9 Roanoke River Gorge opens before you from the overlook, after a 10-minute walk.

115.1 Virginia's Explore Park celebrates the state's role in Westward Expansion. Historic buildings, exhibits, and demonstrations. Fee charged.

120.4 Roanoke Mountain is a 3.7-mile side trip. The one-way loop road takes you over the mountain for impressive views. Steep grades; towed vehicles prohibited.

129.6 Roanoke Valley Overlook gives a view of the largest community along the parkway. Reach the city via U.S. 220 (at milepost 121), Va. 24 (at 112), and U.S. 460 (at 105).

154.5 Smart View is just that; go to the Trail Cabin built in the 1890s and you'll see "a right smart view," especially in early May when the dogwoods bloom.

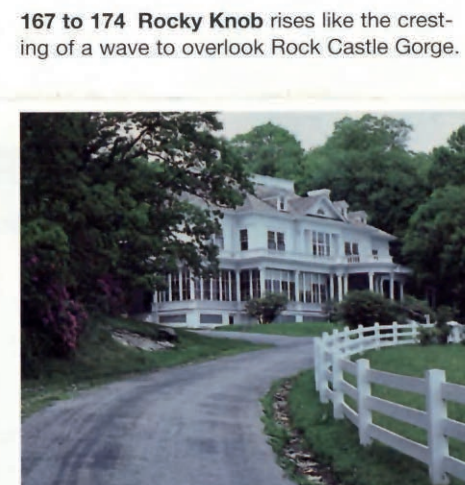
167 to 174 Rocky Knob rises like the cresting of a wave to overlook Rock Castle Gorge.

Flowering shrubs put on a springtime show that rivals the display of trees in fall. Because of the range in elevation, from 649 to 6,047 feet, peak blooming occurs at different times and places—somewhat earlier in Virginia than in North Carolina. Flame azalea is at its best south of Roanoke to Rocky Knob about mid-May and in the high mountains west of Asheville about mid-June. Mountain laurel blooms along Otter Creek in mid-May and elsewhere on the parkway in the first two weeks of June. Dense thickets of catawba rhododendron turn purple north of Peaks of Otter to Onion Mountain and along the bluffs of Doughton Park the first week of June and in Craggy Gardens and through the Balsams after mid-June. Various wildflowers begin to bloom in April and continue through fall.

The diverse history and culture of the southern Appalachian Mountains are described at many overlooks and facilities along the parkway, including Humpback Rocks, Peaks of Otter, Mabry Mill, Brinegar Cabin, Northwest Trading Post, and the Parkway Craft Center at Moses H. Cone Memorial Park. In the Asheville area, stop at the Folk Art Center for demonstrations of crafts and for general parkway information and trip planning.



Mabry Mill, Virginia



Flat Top Manor, Moses H. Cone Memorial Park, North Carolina

176.1 Mabry Mill was operated by E.B. Mabry from 1910 to 1935. A trail leads you to his gristmill, sawmill, blacksmith shop, and to other exhibits. Old-time skills are demonstrated in the summer and fall.

188.8 Groundhog Mountain is a good place to see different kinds of country fences: snake, post and rail, picket, and buck. Picnic grounds and observation tower.

Visiting the Park

The chart (right) lists activities, facilities, and services for 24 primary sites. Most services are available from May 1 through October. In winter, parkway sections may be closed by snow or ice.

Lodging Concessionaire service is provided along the parkway from spring to fall, except year round at Peaks of Otter Lodge. Reservations are recommended. Accommodations and other travel services are available in nearby communities.

For information and reservations, write or call: Peaks of Otter Lodge, P.O. Box 489, Bedford, VA 24523; 540-586-1083. Rocky Knob Cabins, c/o National Park Concessions, 266 Mabry Mill Rd. SE, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120; 540-593-3503, or off-season 270-773-2191. Bluffs Lodge, c/o National Park Concessions, 45356 Blue Ridge Parkway, Laurel Springs, NC 28644; 336-372-4499, or off-season 270-773-2191. Pisgah Inn, P.O. Drawer 749, Waynesville, NC 28786; 828-235-8228.

Walks and Talks You are invited to attend campfire programs and conducted walks at points of interest. Activities are listed on Visitor Activities bulletin boards and in the newspaper, *The Parkway Milepost*, free at visitor centers.

Camping The nine campgrounds are open from about May 1 through October or into early November, depending on the weather. Facilities are limited in winter. Fees are charged, and the length of stay may be limited. Camping is permitted only in designated campgrounds. Drinking water and comfort stations are provided, but there are no shower or laundry facilities. Each campground has designated sites for trailers, but none is equipped for utility connections. Campgrounds have sanitary dumping stations. Each campsite has a table and fireplace. Limited supplies may be purchased at most parkway gasoline stations and camp stores.

Trails Trails are available from many overlooks. Some are short leg-stretchers and take only 10 minutes roundtrip; others take 30 minutes or an hour. Many miles of excellent trails are at Peaks of Otter, Rocky Knob, Doughton Park, and Cone and Price Memorial Parks. The Appalachian Trail roughly parallels the parkway from mile 0 at Rockfish Gap to mile 103. Trail maps are available at visitor centers.

Picnic Areas There are several picnic grounds with tables, fireplaces, drinking water, trash cans, and comfort stations. Many parking overlooks also have picnic tables.

	Visitor Center	Book or Craft Sales	Demonstrations	Food	Lodging	Picnicking	Self-guiding Trails	Camping	Ranger Talks	Hiking	Fishing	Canoe/Boat Rentals
Virginia												
5.8 Humpback Rocks												
29.0 Whetstone Ridge												
60.9 Otter Creek												
63.8 James River												
86.0 Peaks of Otter												
120.4 Roanoke Mountain												
154.5 Smart View												
169.0 Rocky Knob												
176.1 Mabry Mill												
North Carolina												
217.5 Cumberland Knob												
238.5 Brinegar Cabin												
241.1 Doughton Park												
258.6 Northwest Trading Post												
272.0 E. B. Jeffress Park												
294.1 Moses H. Cone Mem. Park												
297.1 Julian Price Mem. Park												
304.4 Linn Cove Viaduct												
316.4 Linville Falls												
331.0 Museum of N.C. Minerals												
339.5 Crabtree Meadows												
364.6 Craggy Gardens												
382.0 Folk Art Center												
408.6 Mount Pisgah												
451.2 Waterrock Knob												

The Blue Ridge Parkway crosses the North Carolina and Virginia state line at mile 216.9. The 1749 party that surveyed the boundary included Peter Jefferson, father of Thomas.

Parkway Information

Regulations and Safety Tips • Drive carefully. The maximum speed limit is 45 miles per hour. Mountainous terrain and sightseeing may require slower speeds. Allow 30 miles per hour when figuring actual travel time. Report all accidents to a park ranger. • Commercial vehicles are prohibited. • Remember to fasten seat belts. • Parking on the shoulder is permitted only if safe and where such parking will not damage the turf or plants. • Fires, including charcoal, are permitted only in campgrounds and picnic areas. • All of the plants and animals on the parkway are protected. Please watch for animals as you drive. You may gather edible fruits, nuts, and berries for your personal consumption only. Hunting is prohibited. • Pets must be kept on a leash or under physical control. • Do not litter; use trash containers and recycling bins at parking and picnic areas. • Do not swim in parkway lakes and ponds. Swimming areas are available in nearby U.S. Forest Service recreation areas, state parks, and resorts. • Only boats without motors or sails are permitted on Price Lake.

More Information
Write: Superintendent
Blue Ridge Parkway
199 Hemphill Knob Road
Asheville, NC 28803
Call: 828-298-0398
or TDD 828-298-0358
Internet: www.nps.gov/blri

The parkway follows the Appalachian Mountain chain and provides seemingly endless views of parallel ranges connected by cross ranges and scattered hills. From Shenandoah National Park the parkway follows the Blue Ridge, eastern ramp, for the Appalachian, for 355 miles. Then, for the remaining 114 miles, it skirts the southern end of the massive Black Mountains, named for the dark green spruce and fir that cover them, weaves through the Craggies, the Pisgahs, the Balsams, and ends in the Great Smokies.

Wildlife is a delight along the parkway. When the sun is high, groundhogs sit erect, and chipmunks and squirrels chitter and chatter. At night, skunks, foxes, opossums, and raccoons can be seen along the roadsides. Look for white-tailed deer and black bear in early morning or evening. Salamanders—less conspicuous but often more colorful—thrive in this moisture-rich environment. More than 100 bird species can be seen during the spring migration.

The Parkway Milepost, free at visitor centers.

Parkway Highlights in North Carolina

Mile 217.5 Cumberland Knob, at 2,885 feet, is a delightful spot to walk through fields and woodlands.

218.6 Fox Hunters Paradise, a 10-minute walk, is where hunters could listen to their hounds baying in the valley below.

238.5 Brinegar Cabin was built by Martin Brinegar about 1880 and lived in until the 1930s when the homestead was purchased from his widow for the parkway. The original cabin stands here today.

238.5 to 244.7 Doughton Park was named for Congressman Robert L. Doughton, a staunch supporter and neighbor of the parkway. One of the best places to see deer. Campground.

258.6 Northwest Trading Post offers crafts from North Carolina's northwestern counties.

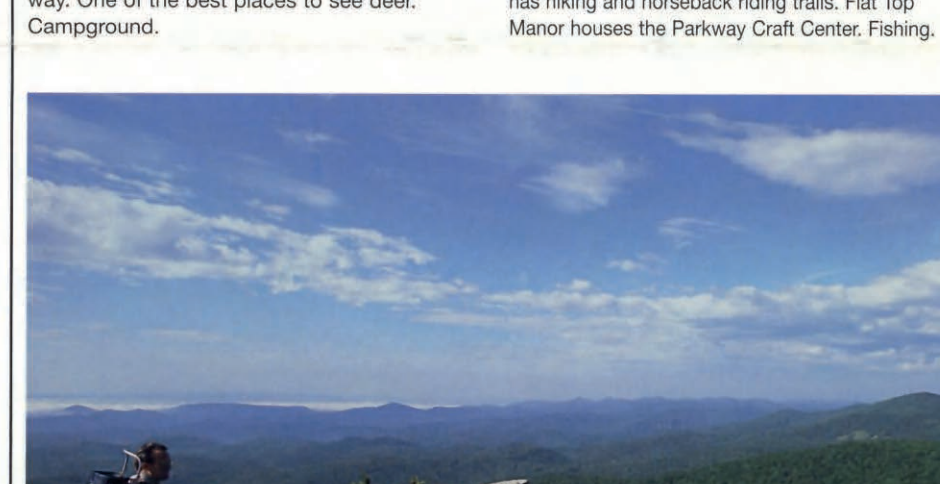
260.6 Jumpinoff Rock, at the end of a short woodland trail, offers a beautiful vista.

264.4 The Lump provides sweeping views of the forested foothills.

272 E.B. Jeffress Park has a self-guiding trail to the Cascades and another trail goes to the old cabin and church.

285.1 Daniel Boone's Trace, which Boone blazed to the west, crosses near here.

292 to 295 Moses H. Cone Memorial Park has hiking and riding trails. Flat Top Manor houses the Parkway Craft Center. Fishing.



Tanawha Trail on Rough Ridge, Grandfather Mountain, North Carolina

295.1 to 298 Julian Price Memorial Park, the former retreat of an insurance executive, offers a variety of short trails and a lake.

304.4 Linn Cove Viaduct, a design and engineering marvel, skirts the side of Grandfather Mountain. Visitor center and trails.

308.3 Flat Rock is worth the walk for the superb view of Grandfather Mountain and Linville Valley.

316.3 Linville Falls roars through a dramatic, rugged gorge. Trails to overlooks.

320.7 Chestoa View trail provides outstanding scenery.

331 Museum of North Carolina Minerals interprets the state's mineral wealth.

339.5 Crabtree Meadows Walk to Crabtree Falls. Campground.

355.4 Mount Mitchell State Park, reached via N.C. 128, has a picnic area, lookout tower, and the highest point east of the Mississippi River.

363.4 to 369.6 Craggy Gardens appear covered with purple rhododendron in mid-to late June. Craggy Rhododendron Trail and other trails (364.1 and 364.6); road to picnic area and trails (367.6).

382 The Folk Art Center offers sales and exhibits of traditional and contemporary crafts of the Appalachian region. Interpretive programs, gallery, and library.



Red salamander



Ground hog



Indigo bunting

408.6 Mount Pisgah was part of the Biltmore Estate. The estate became home of the first forestry school in America and the nucleus of the Pisgah National Forest.

422.4 Devil's Courthouse is a rugged exposed mountaintop rich in Cherokee traditions. A walk to the bare rock summit yields a spectacular view of Pisgah National Forest.

431 Richland Balsam's self-guiding trail takes you through a remnant spruce-fir forest. Highest point on the parkway, 6,047 feet.

451.2 Waterrock Knob provides a panorama of the Great Smokies, visitor center, trail, comfort station, exhibits.

458.2 Height Overlook 1.3 miles spur road goes to a mile-high overlook 1,300 feet above the parkway.

Mile 469 Southern End of the Blue Ridge Parkway intersects with U.S. 441 in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park and the Cherokee Reservation.

©GPO: 2000-489-570/00706 Reprint 2000
Printed on recycled paper.

The Park Watch Program allows you to help protect yourself, the Blue Ridge Parkway, and other visitors. To report criminal activity, accidents, fires, and other emergencies, call 1-800-PARKWATCH (1-800-727-5928).

Blue Ridge Parkway

