

Blue Ridge Parkway

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



Rhododendrons along the parkway; view from Doughton Park, North Carolina.

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 Brochure Major points of interest along the parkway are listed at right by milepost from the northern end in Virginia to the southern end in North Carolina. This left column gives you information about the entire parkway. The chart below—see Visiting the Park—lists visitor services, facilities, and activities.

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

Flowering shrubs put on a springtime show that rivals the trees' fall display. Because of the range of elevation, from 649 to 6,047 feet, blooming peaks at different times and places—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 in mid-June. Mountain laurel blooms along Otter Creek in mid-May and elsewhere on the parkway in the first half 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. Many wildflowers bloom from April through fall.



Rhododendron

The diverse history and culture of the southern Appalachian Mountains are described at many overlooks and facilities along the parkway, including Humpback Rocks, James River Visitor Center, Peaks of Otter, Mabry Mill, Blue Ridge Music Center, 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 craft demonstrations and at the Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center for parkway information. Staff can answer questions and help you plan your trip. Both centers are open year-round, except Thanksgiving, December 25, and January 1.

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

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 north through Shenandoah National Park. US 250 and I-64 take you to Charlottesville to the east or Staunton to the west.



Tulip tree

Dogwood

Mountain ash

Birches

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

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.

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

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

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).

58 to 63.6 Otter Creek tumbles 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.

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



Trillium

Fire pink

Day flower

Pink lady's slipper

Crested dwarf iris

Mountain laurel

Trout lily

Indian paintbrush

84 to 87 Peaks of Otter's spectacular views have been popular since the days of Thomas Jefferson. A shuttle bus goes to the summit of Sharp Top (fee). Visit the Nature Center and 1930s Johnson Farm.

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

115.1 Virginia's Explore Park Visitor Center has parkway information and exhibits, including a 20-foot-long topographical map of the entire parkway.

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 US 220 (at milepost 121), VA 24 (at 112), and US 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 dogwood trees bloom.

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

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



Mabry Mill, Virginia



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

213 Blue Ridge Music Center celebrates Blue Ridge music and musicians, a significant strand of American musical culture alive and thriving in the region. Includes a visitor center, museum, outdoor amphitheater, and trails. For program listings visit www.blueridgemusiccenter.org.

Visiting the Park

This chart lists activities, facilities, and services for 26 primary sites. Most services are available late May through October. Snow or ice may close sections of the parkway.

Lodging Concessionaire service is provided spring to fall along the parkway and year-round at Peaks of Otter Lodge. Reservations recommended. Find lodging and other travel services in nearby communities.

For information and reservations check these sites on the Internet or contact: Peaks of Otter Lodge, PO Box 489, Bedford, VA 24523; 540-586-1081. Rocky Knob Cabins, 266 Mabry Mill Rd. SE, Meadows of Dan, VA 24120; 276-952-2947, PSC 188, PO Drawer 749, Waynesboro, NC 28786; 828-235-8228.

Walks and Talks Don't miss the campfire programs and conducted walks at points of interest. Activities are listed on Visitor Activities bulletin boards, in *The Parkway Milepost*, free at visitor centers, and at www.nps.gov/blri.

Camping The nine campgrounds are open mid-May through October or early November (fee). Facilities are limited in winter. Lengths of stay may be limited. Camp only in designated campgrounds. There are drinking water and restrooms but no laundry facilities; only Mount Pisgah has showers. Campgrounds have trailer sites and sanitary dumping stations but no utility connections. You can buy limited supplies at most parkway camp stores. You can make campground reservations at www.recreation.gov.

Trails Trails start at many overlooks. Some take 10 minutes round-trip, others 30 minutes or more. Miles of trails explore the 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 Picnic grounds have tables, fireplaces, drinking water, and comfort stations. Many parking overlooks have picnic tables.

Accessibility We strive to make our facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. For information go to a visitor center, ask a ranger, call, or check our website.



Virginia												
5.8	Humpback Rocks	●	●	●					●	●	●	●
60.9	Otter Creek									●	●	●
63.8	James River	●	●						●	●		●
68.0	Peaks of Otter	●	●	●			●	●	●	●	●	●
115.1	Virginia's Explore Park	●	●									
120.4	Roanoke Mountain										●	●
154.5	Smart View								●			●
169.0	Rocky Knob	●	●						●	●	●	●
176.1	Mabry Mill	●	●	●					●	●		
213.0	Blue Ridge Music Center	●	●	●								●
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 NC Minerals	●	●	●								
339.5	Crabtree Falls											●
364.6	Craggy Gardens	●	●						●	●		●
382.0	Folk Art Center	●	●	●					●			●
384.0	Blue Ridge Pky Visitor Ctr	●	●							●		●
408.6	Mount Pisgah	●				●	●	●	●	●	●	●
451.2	Waterrock Knob	●	●									●

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

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 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 Jumpin'off 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 late June. Craggy Pinnacle Trail and other 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 to the Cascades. 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, an insurance executive's former retreat, 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 well 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 with interactive exhibits.

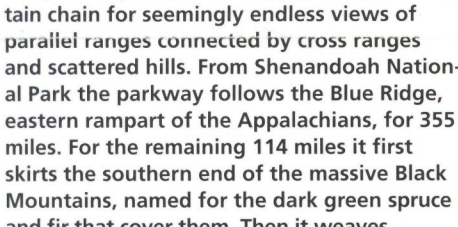
339.5 Crabtree Falls Walk to Crabtree Falls. Campground.

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

363.4 to 369.6 Craggy Gardens seem to be covered with purple rhododendrons in mid-to late June. Craggy Pinnacle Trail and other trails (364.1 and 364.6); road to picnic area and trails (367.6).

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

384 Blue Ridge Parkway Visitor Center has a film, exhibits, and overview of the Blue Ridge National Heritage area and the parkway.



Red salamander



Ground hog



Indigo bunting

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

422.4 Devils Courthouse is a rugged, exposed mountaintop rich in Cherokee traditions. A walk to its bare rock summit rewards you with a spectacular view of Pisgah National Forest.

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

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

458.2 Heintooga Overlook spur road takes you to a mile-high overlook 1.3 miles from the parkway.

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

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Emergencies, criminal activity, accidents, and fires: 911

For all other parkway information: 828-298-0398

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