



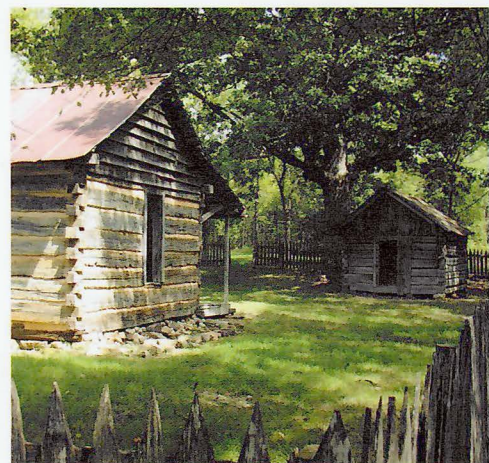
You can find quiet places for reflection and exploration on the Buffalo River.

NPS / DALE DOMBROSKI

A River Nestled in the Arkansas Ozarks

How did this river escape impoundment, impairment, and massive change? To preserve the Buffalo River as a free-flowing stream, Congress designated it as America's first national river in 1972. It nestles in the Arkansas Ozark Plateau, which is bounded on the north, east, and south by the Missouri, Mississippi, and Arkansas rivers. Earliest maps called this the "Buffaloe Fork of the White River," no doubt for now-extinct woodland bison. Originating high in the Boston Mountains, the Buffalo drops steadily to its confluence with the White 151 miles to the east. The gradient is steeper and the water faster on the upper river, but the river levels out and slows down over its course. Long, quiet pools between rapids disguise its vertical fall.

Side trips to hollows flanking the river dramatize this land's wildness and isolation. Some of the many prehistoric and historic cultural sites are 8,000 years old. There are village sites on river terraces, seasonal bluff shelters of prehistoric hunters and gatherers, and farmsteads of the Mississippian people who raised corn on floodplains or of ancestral Osage Indians who hunted along the Buffalo in historic times. Remains of early settlers' cabins abound. In Boxley Valley you can see traditional farming. Other places—like Parker-Hickman Farmstead in Erbie, the 1920s Collier Homestead at Tyler Bend, and Rush Mining District and Civilian Conservation Corps structures at Buffalo Point—illustrate conspicuous events or the threads of Buffalo River history.



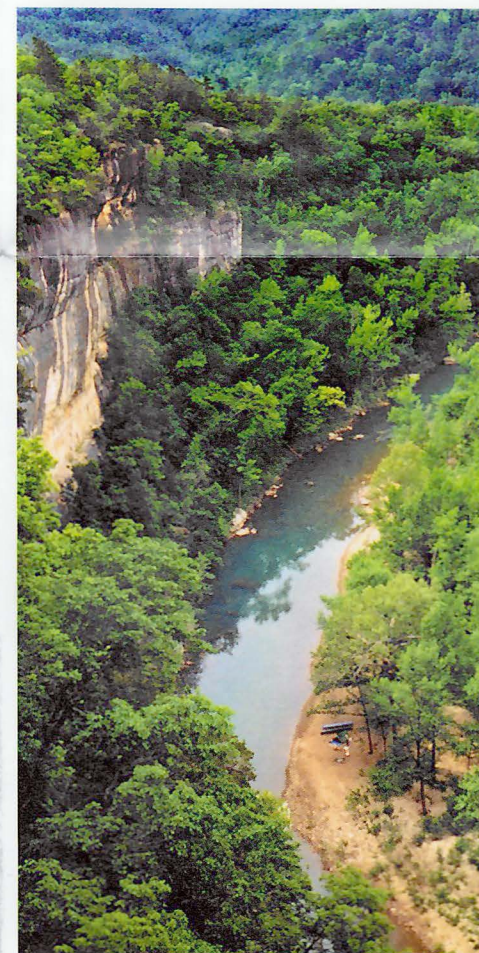
Collier Homestead near Tyler Bend

NPS / MARK ROBINSON



Erbie Rock

NPS / DALE DOMBROSKI

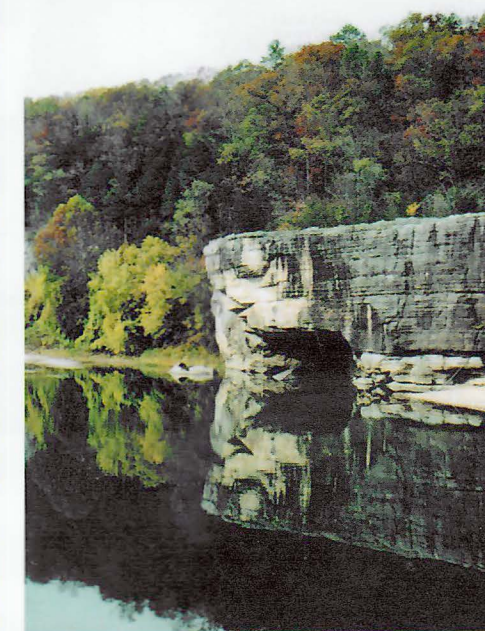


Buffalo River from Big Bluff

NPS

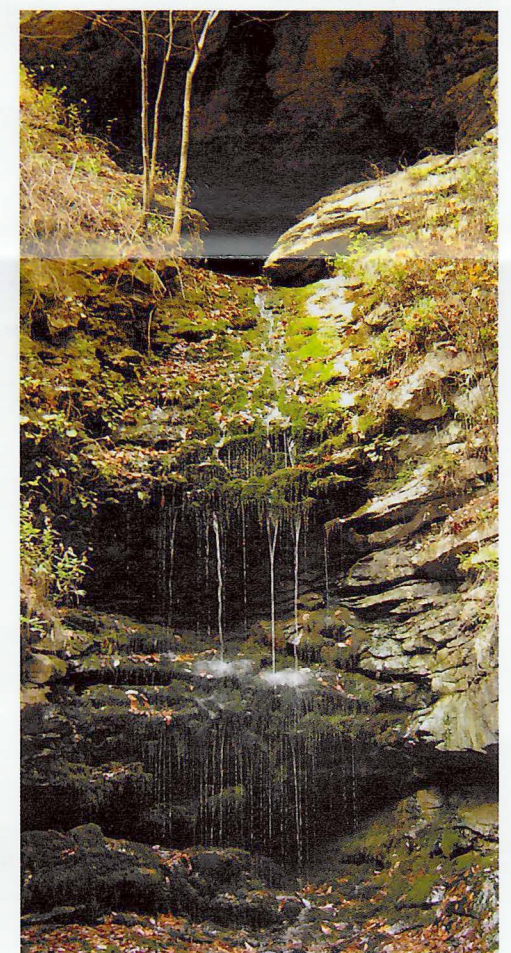
Scenic Landscape Formations

The Ozark's highest river bluffs—up to 500 feet high—are sandstone, limestone, and dolomite. Centuries of erosion sculpted multicolored cliffs to accent the Buffalo River and its setting within wild mountain beauty. Its caves, cliffs, sinkholes, waterfalls, springs, and often intriguing rock formations typify Arkansas Ozarks geology.



Reflection of Skull Rock on a fall day

NPS / APRIL WOOD



Eden Falls

NPS

Nature Along the River

Plant and animal species of the Southwest, Northeast, and Southeast coexist in the Ozarks. Armadillos, roadrunners, and



White-tailed deer

NPS / MARK ROBINSON



Juniper hairstreak butterfly feeding

NPS / CAVEN CLARK

tarantulas live with lichens found in arctic tundra too. The range of elevations (375 to 2,385 feet), moisture, exposure, and soil types support over 1,500 plant species. The river boasts 74 species of clearwater fish. White-tailed deer, raccoon, and opossum are frequently seen, but the bobcat, mink, bear, otter, and beaver are more elusive.

Elk on the Buffalo River

In the 1980s the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission introduced Rocky Mountain elk to Newton County. Elk were not released in the park, but they quickly moved into its maintained hayfields and remote woods along the Buffalo River. Now the growing herd (estimated at 500 elk) is both a tourist attraction and a park management concern. Elk-viewing is popular in October and November in Boxley Valley. Be alert then to heavy pedestrian and vehicle traffic.



Elk Cow

NPS / DALE DOMBROSKI

Hunting and Fishing

Arkansas hunting and fishing licenses are required, and state regulations apply. Find regulations specific to the Buffalo River at a park contact station or at www.agfc.com, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission website. Respect the rights of the private property owners with homes and livestock in the park.

Hunting Non-developed park areas are open to hunting—mostly deer and turkey. Various hunting seasons may occur from early September to April and mid-May to mid-June (squirrel only). Anyone in the woods in hunting season must use caution and wear bright clothing—hunter orange is recommended—especially in November's gun deer season and spring turkey season. All nongame species are protected.



Turkey

NPS / MARK ROBINSON



Smallmouth bass

NPS / DAN FEASER

Fishing The Buffalo River is a favorite with anglers. Long pools and shallow riffles offer excellent fishing. The Buffalo and its tributaries are among the nation's richest waters in number of fish species. Anglers favor smallmouth bass, catfish, Ozark bass, and a variety of panfish. Most people fish from the bank or a boat. Float fishing is common on the river's lower, eastern half. Catch-and-release of smallmouth bass—with artificial lures, barbless hooks, and careful handling—is encouraged.

Experience Ozark Vistas, River Float Trips, Wilderness Walks, and More

Getting Here Use US 65 or AR 7, 14, or 21. Little Rock, AR, Fayetteville, AR, and Springfield, MO, are two- or three-hour drives from here.

Accommodations Harrison, Jasper, Yellville, Marshall, and elsewhere offer food and lodging. In the park, Buffalo Point has rental cabins and a restaurant open seasonally. Contact Buffalo Point Concessions, 2261 Hwy. 268E, Yellville, AR 72687, 870-449-6206, or www.buffalopoint.net.

Camping Eleven campgrounds nearby are first-come, first-served. You can reserve some Buffalo Point campsites. Tyler Bend and Buffalo Point campgrounds offer restrooms, showers, and trailer dump stations seasonally. Most Buffalo Point sites have water and electrical hookups. Most campgrounds charge fees, and a reservation is recommended mid-March through mid-November. Services at Tyler Bend and Buffalo Point are limited November through March (dates vary). Camping limit is 14 consecutive days. You must reserve park group sites or

pavilions. Make reservations at www.recreation.gov or call 877-444-6777. Campgrounds from Steel Creek to Rush Landing are excellent for beginning or ending float trips. All have toilets. The steep roads to Steel Creek and Kyles Landing are not recommended for trailers, buses, or motor homes. Campground quiet hours are 10 pm to 6 am. Use generators only in developed areas 8 am to 8 pm.

Hiking The park offers hiking year-round. Be cautious in winter when ice/snow may be hazardous and summer when temperatures can be extremely high. Check the weather forecast prior to your arrival and plan accordingly. Hike with a trail map, available at the visitor center, visitor contact stations, and the park website.

Short day-use trails are at Lost Valley, Erbie, Pruitt, Tyler Bend, Buffalo Point, and Rush. More difficult trails are in the Ponca and Lower Buffalo Wilderness areas. Hunting is allowed in the park, so use caution and wear bright clothing when hiking.

Leashed pets are allowed in campgrounds and parking areas, along roads, and on the river and gravel bars. Pets are not allowed in the backcountry or on trails except for Mill Creek Trail and the trails surrounding the Buffalo Point Campground (Overlook, Campground, and Forest). Pets must be leashed and/or under physical control at all times. Do not attach your pet to your canoe while floating or leave an unattended pet tied to an object.

Horseback Riding Horseback riding is permitted on many park trails. In the Lower Buffalo Wilderness the trail loop from Hathaway Horse Camp to Cow Creek, from Cow Creek along Buffalo River to Cook Hollow, and then back to Hathaway Horse Camp is a special-use zone. Horses are restricted to established trails there and in the Ponca Wilderness. Elsewhere, horse and stock use is allowed on abandoned roads, gravel bars, old traces, backcountry trails, and shoulders of roads open to motor vehicles. Horses and pack animals are not allowed on frontcountry trails or in areas closed to horses. Primitive camping

facilities near Steel Creek, near Erbie, and at Woolum can accommodate trailers.

Interpretive Programs Events in spring and summer at Buffalo Point, Tyler Bend, Pruitt, Ozark, and elsewhere include campfire programs, guided walks and hikes, guided canoe floats, and Ozark folk music. Schedules are at park information stations.

For a Safe Visit Use common sense in this hazardous natural area. • Cell phone coverage in the river corridor is spotty. • Never swim alone or when the river level is high. There are no life-guarded swimming areas. • Diving is extremely dangerous; rocks and logs lie unseen below the surface. • Loose, crumbly rocks or winter ice can make climbing riverside bluffs hazardous. A fall from a bluff is certain injury; getting medical help is difficult and dangerous and may take hours. • Boil all water that does not come from approved sources. • Bury all human waste at least 100 feet from water. Pack out all garbage.

• ATV use is prohibited in the park. • Park fire-arm regulations conform to Arkansas regulations; firearms are prohibited in public buildings. For firearms regulations check the park website. • Consult the Superintendent's Compendium on the park website for any special regulations or restrictions.

Emergencies call 888-692-1162 or 911

To Enrich Your Visit River guides, topographic maps, and books are sold at the visitor center and ranger stations. Purchase Access, Senior, and Annual passes at park headquarters.

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.

More Information
Buffalo National River
Park Headquarters
402 N. Walnut St., Suite 136
Harrison, AR 72601
870-365-2700
TTY 870-741-2884
www.nps.gov/buff

Tyler Bend Visitor Center 870-439-2502
Buffalo Point Ranger Station 870-449-4311
Steel Creek Ranger Station 870-861-2570

Buffalo National River is one of over 400 parks in the National Park System. To learn more visit www.nps.gov.

National Park Foundation.
Join the park community.
www.nationalparks.org

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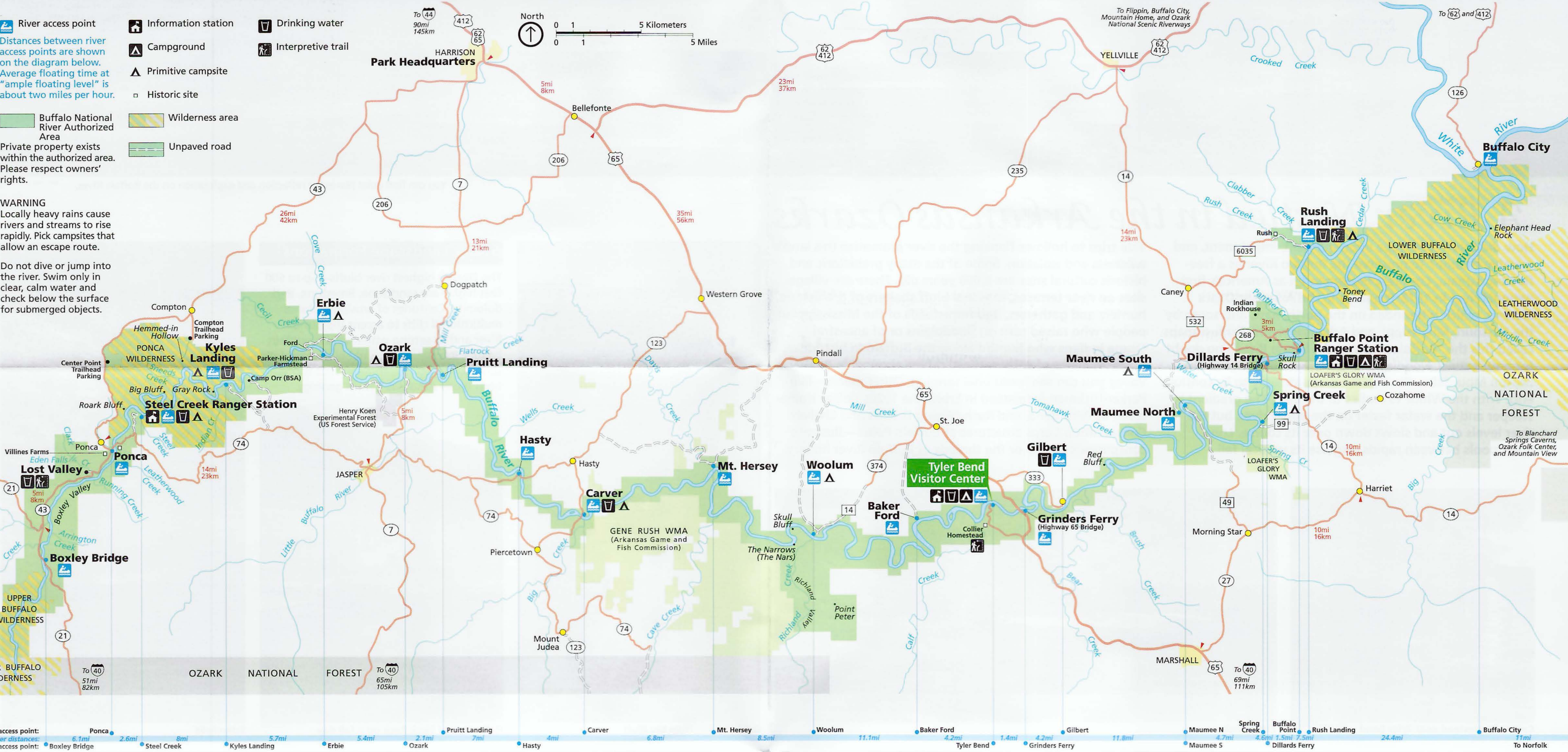
River access point
Distances between river access points are shown on the diagram below. Average floating time at "ample floating level" is about two miles per hour.

Information station
Campground
Primitive campsite
Historic site
Wilderness area
Unpaved road

Private property exists within the authorized area. Please respect owners' rights.

WARNING
Locally heavy rains cause rivers and streams to rise rapidly. Pick campsites that allow an escape route.

Do not dive or jump into the river. Swim only in clear, calm water and check below the surface for submerged objects.



Floating the Buffalo River

Few experiences can compare to a float trip down the Buffalo. Clean waters, high rocky bluffs, wooded hillsides, and myriad wildflowers in season restore the nature enthusiast. Rent canoes nearby. Beginners can float slow-moving sections of the river.

Check with a ranger about river conditions before you set out.

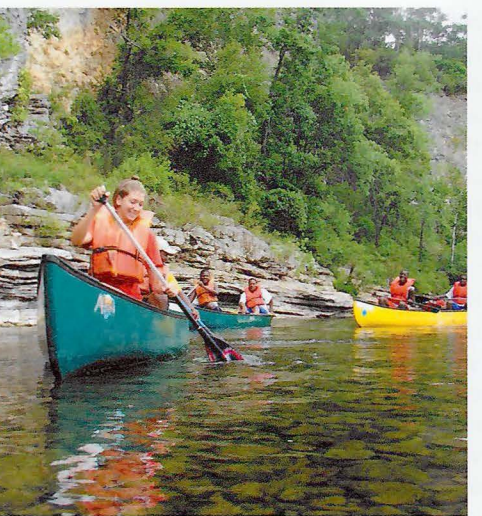
The Buffalo River offers a near-wilderness experience between Carver and Woolum and downstream of Rush Landing. Choose a half-day, 10-day, or 120-mile float or anything in between. Boat motors under 10 hp are allowed only up to the Erbie boat launch.

Before Setting Out
Upstream from Pruitt whitewater is usually floatable in winter and spring only. Downstream when the water level is low, Pruitt has riffles, calm pools, and occasionally fast water. Between Ponca and Kyles Landing use is high, especially on weekends. Canoe or kayak experience is highly recommended.

On the lower Buffalo, Rush Landing is the last takeout before entering the Lower Buffalo Wilderness. View the Buffalo

National River Services and River Level Guide at www.ar.water.usgs.gov/buffaloriver for river conditions.

Concessioners Park-approved concessioners (see [park website](http://www.nps.gov)) rent canoes, kayaks, rafts, and johnboats and provide all trip needs except personal gear and food. Their brief talks get you and their equipment safely over rapids and down the river, so listen carefully. They also offer shuttle services for both floaters and hikers. Guided john-



A serene stretch of the Buffalo River

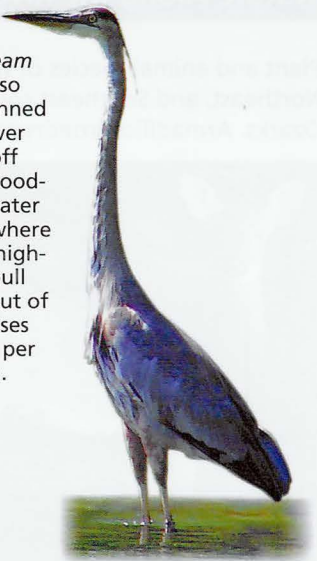


Whitewater challenges paddlers on the upper river.

boat fishing trips serve the middle and lower river. Gear and food can be provided.

River Safety Observe all river warning signs and water safety regulations. • US Coast Guard-approved life jacket required for all vessel occupants and must be worn by children under 13. • Glass containers are prohibited on and near the river. • Keep gear in waterproof containers; stow them low and balanced in your canoe. • If you capsize,

stay on the upstream side of the canoe so you do not get pinned between it and river obstacles. • Stay off the river during floodwaters. If rising water threatens, camp where you can move to higher ground—and pull your canoe well out of the water. River rises of a foot or more per hour are common.



Great blue heron