

Simple Pleasures For All Seasons

Catoctin Mountain Park was created during the Great Depression of the 1930s as a place for people to reconnect with nature. Today the park remains true to its origins—and takes on new significance as new generations discover fiery autumn leaves, jewel-like spring wildflowers, a stream flowing through a blanket of snow, and a hike through the woods to a spectacular valley view.

At Home in the Mountains

Long before the arrival of Europeans, small tribes of American Indians farmed, hunted, fished, and quarried stone. In 1732 settlers began to arrive in Maryland's Monocacy valley. By then, Catoctin was neutral ground where no American Indians lived permanently and were seldom seen. The name "Catoctin" probably came from the Kittoctons, who lived nearby.

The first pioneers were second-generation Americans and German immigrants. They came west from Philadelphia across the Susquehanna River, then southwest. They settled along the Monocacy because of Lord Baltimore's attractive offer of 200 acres of land rent-free for three years and one cent per

acre each year thereafter. In the mid-1800s more Germans and some Swiss and Scotch-Irish came to the area.

At first settlers found enough natural resources to make an adequate living. Many families established farms in the high valleys. Today you can see stone fences, cellar pits, and other remnants as you walk through the forest. Other settlers harvested oak and chestnut bark, rich sources of tannin, and supplied it to the developing tanneries in the Monocacy valley.

The discovery of hematite (iron) in the region spawned a new industry—iron production. The Catoctin iron furnace was built in the 1770s and operated for well over a hundred years. Its



chief products were stoves, wheel rims, cannons and shot, and cast pieces for machinery.

There were founders, molders, finishers, miners, woodcutters, charcoal makers (colliers), and teamsters working here. Enslaved and free African Americans worked skilled and unskilled jobs. Today you can see

the remains of the furnace in Cunningham Falls State Park.

Over the years clear-cutting for charcoal making, stripping of bark for tanning, and logging depleted the natural resources. It became harder for people to eke out a living, and many moved

away. One of the last money-making products was whiskey. Transporting bulky corn and rye grains through the mountains to market had always proved troublesome and expensive. In the 1700s farmers began to distill grain to alcohol, which earned them a much greater profit.

Taxes—and later Prohibition laws in the 1920s—forced the bootleggers into hiding. A 1929 raid on the Blue Blazes still, where a deputy sheriff was killed, spelled the much publicized end of large-scale "moonshine" making. The Blue Blazes Whiskey Still Trail leads you to a replica of a typical farm still.

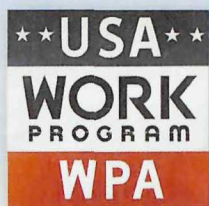


Left to right: Chimney Rock; Catoctin iron furnace; whiskey jug.

LEFT TO RIGHT: NPS / MARK MUSE; THE SHENANDOAH HISTORICAL SOCIETY; MUSEUM OF THE SHENANDOAH VALLEY / RON BLUNT

A Natural Setting Restored

Catoctin Mountain Park got its start during the Great Depression. In 1935 the federal government bought over 10,000 acres and developed it as the Catoctin Recreational Demonstration Area (RDA). The program



created public parks out of marginal farmland near cities. Forty-six RDAs were created in 24 states, and most eventually became state or national parks. In 1936 the Works Progress Administration (WPA), another New Deal agency, hired hundreds of local men to build maintenance shops, a visitor

center, picnic areas, and cabin camps. The park's chestnut and oak trees were the ideal "log cabin" material for the rustic architecture.

In 1939 the Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) set up camp at today's Round Meadow. Their job was to return the depleted Catoctin landscape to

native Eastern hardwood forest. They planted trees, turned old farmland into meadows, and restored streams to their "natural" flow—all of which encouraged the return of native species. The CCC also built roads, trails, guardrails, stone walls, and shelters. The camp closed in 1941, on the eve of our entry into World War II.



The park was drafted into the war effort as a rehabilitation center for sailors and marines and a training facility for the Office of Strategic Services (OSS). President Franklin D. Roosevelt chose Camp Hi-Catoctin as a retreat he called Shangri-La. It was renamed Camp David in the 1950s by President Dwight D. Eisenhower. Camp David is not open to the public.

In 1954 the park was divided along Md. Rte. 77. To the north is Catoctin Mountain Park, which remains in the National Park System. To the south is Cunningham Falls State Park, managed by the Maryland Park Service.



The 1960s revived the spirit of the CCC when Camp Round Meadow became the nation's first Job Corps center. The program started by President Lyndon B. Johnson continues around the nation today, combining work, education, and recreation for disadvantaged youth.

Left to right: WPA poster; CCC trail crew, 1930s; dogwood blossoms.

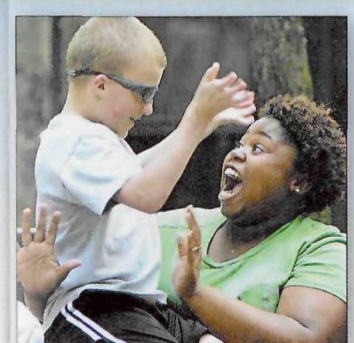
LEFT TO RIGHT: NATIONAL ARCHIVES; NPS, VISUALS UNLIMITED

Activities for Everyone

Catoctin Mountain Park is full of stories, best told via its 25 miles of trails. Old stone fences, logging roads, charcoal-making exhibits, and high valley vistas tell us how people once valued this land for its commercial resources. Trails through the regrowth of red oaks, birches, dogwoods, and maples, and other trees remind us that nature brings us wealth by simply being itself.

Trails vary from the quarter-mile wheelchair-accessible Spicebush trail to the strenuous three-mile climb to Chimney Rock overlook. About six miles of trail are designated for horse use. For detailed trail descriptions, check at the visitor center or visit www.nps.gov/cato.

Three cabin camps offer accommodations for one or more nights. Misty Mount and Greentop



were built in the 1930s. Cabin sizes vary from three- to twelve-person capacity. There are centrally located bathrooms and dining halls. Round Meadow has more modern facilities and can be used in all seasons. Round Meadow and Greentop are wheelchair accessible.

Big Hunting Creek has long been popular among fly fishermen. In fact, it is the first stream

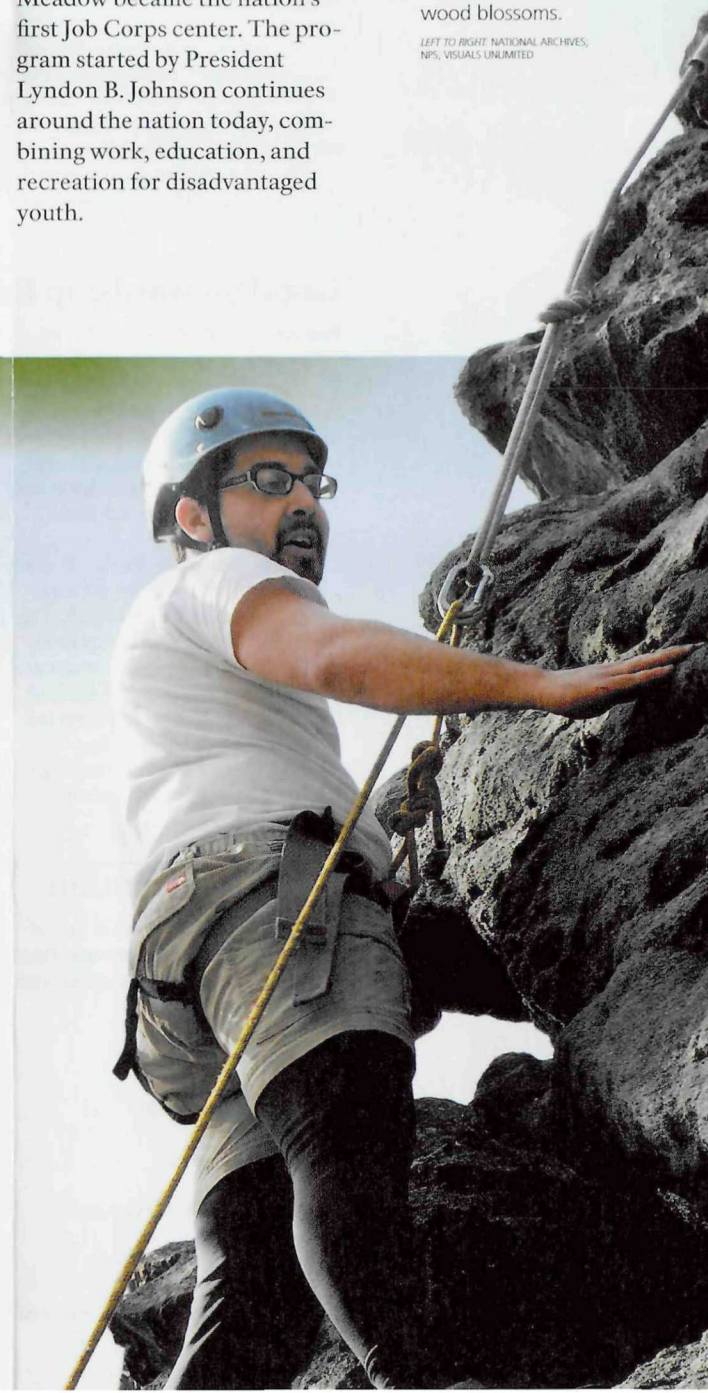
in Maryland designated as fly-fishing-only stream and the first catch-and-release trout stream. State fishing regulations apply.

In winter, some sections of park roads are closed to vehicular traffic and opened for winter recreation. Most park trails are narrow, steep and rocky, but a few sections are good for skiing. A base of six to eight inches of snow is needed for safe trail skiing. Keep in mind that all trails are designated as foot trails, not ski trails.

Rock climbing and rappelling are allowed only by permit.

Left to right: Camp Misty Mount; cross-country skier; camper and counselor at Camp Greentop; rock climber.

LEFT TO RIGHT: NPS / MARK MUSE; STOCKPHOTO / ADAM OBERG; © THE GAZETTE / TOM FIEDOR, NPS





Big Hunting Creek
NPS / TERRI ALVAREZ

Things You Should Know

For park orientation and information, stop first at the Catoctin Mountain Park Visitor Center off MD 77 or Cunningham Falls State Park Visitor Center off US 15 in the Manor Area (open seasonally). Also in the Manor Area is the Scales and Tales Aviary (301-271-7574), housing rehabilitated birds of prey for educational programs.

Groups of 10 or more may require a permit; schedule group visits in advance. Program schedules are available at the visitor centers or on park websites.

Scenic Drives Park roads wind through woods and along streams. Portions of Park Central Rd. and Manahan Rd. are closed in winter. Catoctin Hollow Rd., south of MD 77, offers access to—and an overlook of—Hunting Creek Lake.

Trails There's everything from short, paved loop trails to serious hiking trails. Bicycles are not permitted on park trails. Horses are allowed only on the designated horse

trails off Manahan Rd. (closed February through mid-April).

Picnic Areas Owens Creek, Chestnut, Manor, and William Houck areas have restrooms, tables, and fireplaces. The William Houck Area (lake) can fill up on summer and holiday weekends; arrive early to ensure admission. A 150-person picnic pavilion at the Manor Area can be reserved via the state parks reservation system (*see below*). Picnic tables are located throughout the parks, but fires are permitted only at the four developed picnic areas.

Swimming, Boating, Fishing Hunting Creek Lake at the William Houck Area has sandy beaches, a modern bathhouse, and summer boat rentals. The lake is stocked, and there is stream fishing in Owens and Little Hunting creeks. Big Hunting Creek is a trout management area; fly fishing only and catch-and-release. A Maryland license with trout stamp is required for those 16 and older.

Camping and Cabins

Camping is permitted only in campgrounds, cabins, and shelters. Information on facilities, reservations, and fees is found at park websites.

Manor and William Houck camping areas are in Cunningham Falls State Park. Reservations are strongly recommended; see state park contact information below. Owens Creek camping area is in Catoctin Mountain Park. Poplar Grove Youth

Tenting Area in Catoctin Mountain Park requires advance reservations through www.recreation.gov.

In Catoctin Mountain Park, you can rent individual cabins at Misty Mount. Cabins for groups are available at Greentop and Round Meadow, both excellent outdoor classrooms for environmental education. For reservations call 301-663-9330.

Good Stewardship Begins With You

Posted speed limits are enforced. • Park only in designated areas. Parking in day-use areas is not permitted after dusk. • Build fires only in fireplaces. • Store food away from raccoons, yellow jackets, and especially bears. • When swimming, stay within the guarded beach areas.

Catoctin Mountain Park Pets are permitted at Owens Creek Campground but must be on a leash. They are not allowed in buildings or in group camps. • Service animals are welcome in the park. • All natural and cultural objects are protected by federal law; do not collect or damage them. • For firearms regulations, check the park website.

• Camp David, the Presidential Retreat, is not visible from the roads and is not open to the public.

Cunningham Falls State Park Pets are only permitted in developed areas during specific times of year. Contact the state park for more information (*see below*). • Alcoholic beverages are prohibited in all areas of the park. • Climbing on rocks at the falls is dangerous—and highly discouraged. • Firearms are permitted only in designated hunting areas during specified seasons. • Know and obey state hunting and fishing regulations. • Do not deface or remove trees, wildflowers, plants, or rocks.

More Information

Catoctin Mountain Park is one of over 400 areas in the National Park System. For more information, visit www.nps.gov.

Catoctin Mountain Park
6602 Foxville Rd.
Thurmont, MD 21788
301-663-9388
www.nps.gov/cato

National Parks Reservations:
1-877-444-6777
www.recreation.gov

24-hour emergency: 1-866-677-6677

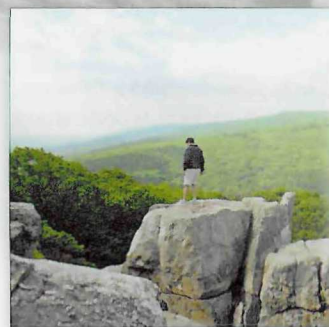
Cunningham Falls State Park is managed by the Maryland Park Service.

Cunningham Falls State Park
14039 Catoctin Hollow Rd.
Thurmont, MD 21788
301-271-7574
www.dnr.maryland.gov/publiclands

State Park Reservations:
1-888-432-CAMP (2267) or
reservations.dnr.state.md.us

24-hour emergency: 410-260-8888

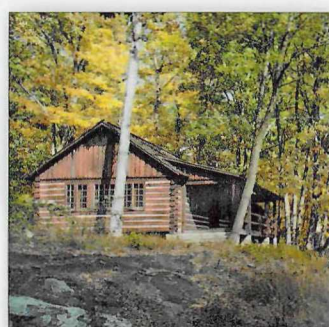
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Chimney Rock overlook
NPS



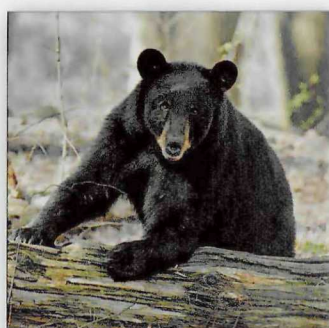
Blue Blazes whiskey still
NPS / MARK MUSE



Camp Misty Mount
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Environmental education program
NPS



Be bear aware!
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Winter hiking
NPS

