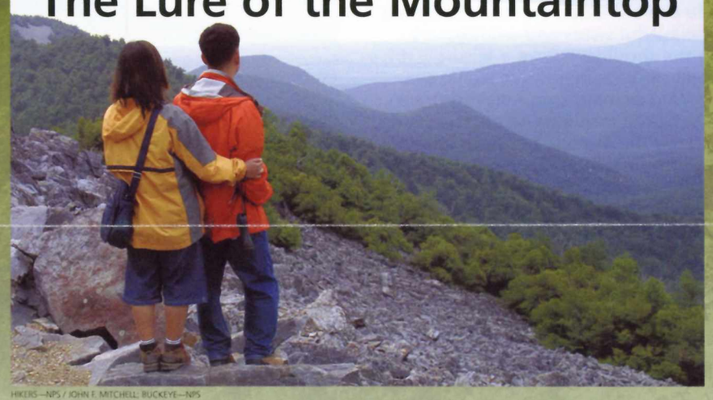
Shenandoah

Shenandoah National Park
Virginia

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

The Lure of the Mountaintop



HIKERS—NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL; BUCKEYE—NPS

Mountaintops have always beckoned humans. To stand at the top—to see as far as the eye allows, to take in the vastness of our world—is to be awed and humbled and inspired all at once.

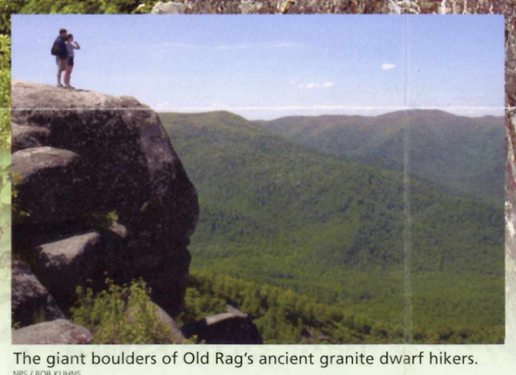


Shenandoah National Park, established in 1935 before skyscrapers and air travel were common, was designed to give millions the opportunity to travel to the top.

From the beginning, national park planners, capitalizing on the new popularity of motor cars, called for Shenandoah's "greatest single feature" to be a sky-line drive on which motorists could enjoy a leisurely drive through the Blue Ridge and experience the awe and inspiration of magnificent views. Construction of Skyline Drive—your road to the top—was begun even before Congress established the national park.

Today, Skyline Drive is your portal to a multitude of experiences. Discover the rich natural and cultural stories hidden in the forests and hollows of Shenandoah. Learn about the establishment of this new park in the East that would give urban residents the national park experience that had become popular in the West.

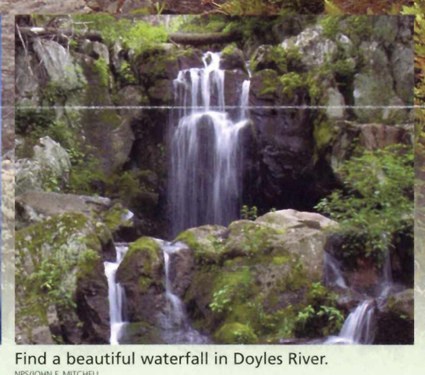
Formed from over 1,000 privately owned tracts of land, Shenandoah started as a patchwork of forests, fields, orchards, and home sites. In 1976 Congress designated over 40 percent of the park as Wilderness, providing the highest level of protection to this precious resource.



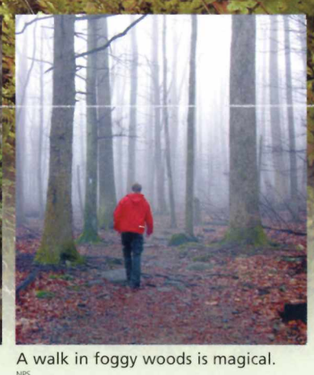
The giant boulders of Old Rag's ancient granite dwarf hikers.
NPS / BOB KUHNS



A winter visit can be spectacular.
NPS/HUGH CRANDALL



Find a beautiful waterfall in Doyles River.
NPS/JOHN F. MITCHELL



A walk in foggy woods is magical.
NPS



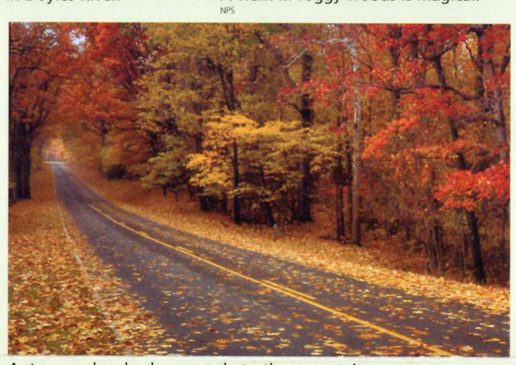
Lady's slippers adorn woodland trails.
NPS / ED KNEPLEY



Groundhogs are a common sight along the Drive.
NPS / BOB KUHNS



Mountain laurel blooms in June.
NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL



Autumn colors beckon people to the mountains.
Top: View from the top of Little Stony Man Cliffs.
NPS / ED KNEPLEY; TOP—NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL

Seasonal Change in Shenandoah

Spring may arrive at your home on some specific date, but here it climbs up the mountains about 100 feet per day, starting in March with blooming red maple, hepatica, and serviceberry. Chipmunks and groundhogs appear above ground again. Trees won't leaf out on peaks until late May. Wildflowers begin to bloom in April and May, and the large-flowered trillium carpets forest floors. Pink azalea blooms in late May, mountain laurel in June. Migrating birds in colorful plumage return. Each seasonal cycle in the year is different, bringing new reasons to return to the park.

Summer wears its mantle of deep greens on ridge and in hollow. Birds are nesting—catbirds, indigo buntings, and towhees. Deer fawns and bear cubs are out and about, exploring and learning. Blooming wildflowers proliferate as the season progresses, covering roadsides and open areas by late summer.

Crisp fall days bring brilliant leaf colors, usually peaking between mid- to late October. The southward migrations of birds feature hawks in large numbers flying along the ridge.

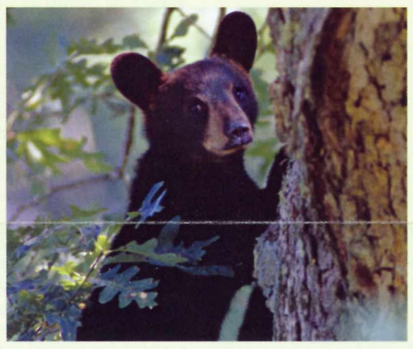
With more clear days and leaf-bare trees, winter is the time for distant views and the frozen sculptures tumbling waterfalls create. Seasons and colors change; migratory songbirds, monarch butterflies, and hawks come and go. Shenandoah's year-round residents—deer, bear, and others—adapt to each season in turn, making each day different and exciting.



A pileated woodpecker feeds its young.
© ANN SIMPSON



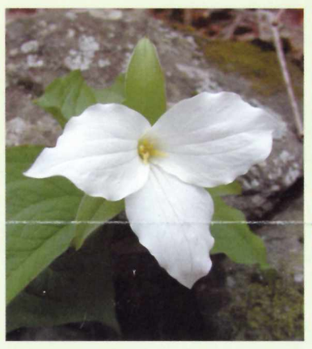
White-tailed deer fawns have spots for camouflage.
NPS/PAUL G. FABOUR



Black bears thrive in Shenandoah.
© ANN SIMPSON



Explore new worlds with a park ranger.
NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL



Trilliums dot the forest floor in spring.
NPS / BARB STEWART



Remnants of home sites can still be found in the park's backcountry.
NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL



Concrete trail markers direct hikers.
NPS

Shenandoah Stories



CCC workers build erosion controls along Skyline Drive.
NPS, BELOW—NPS / LEWIS

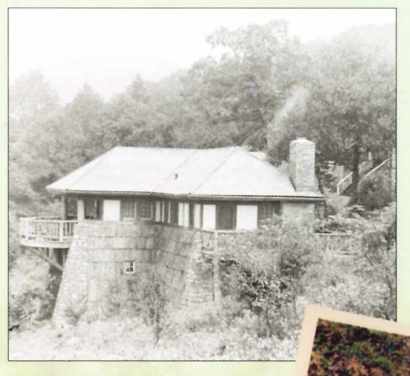
People came to the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia for rest and recreation long before Shenandoah National Park was established. Skyland Resort has hosted weary urbanites for long stays since the late 1800s. Later, President Herbert Hoover and First Lady Lou Henry Hoover built their Rapidan Camp as a retreat to escape the stress of work and summer's heat and humidity in the Nation's Capital. The Depression-era Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) "boys" came in the 1930s to build many rustic-style park facilities—some still seen and used today—so that everyone could retreat to the mountains for recreation and relaxation.

You can compare notes with those of earlier visitors by exploring Shenandoah's rich stories in more depth. Visit Skyland Resort and tour the restored Massanutten Lodge. Plan a trip to Rapidan Camp to see the restored presidential cabin and an exhibit about the Hoovers. Stop at visitor centers for films and exhibits about even more of the park's stories.

One of the best ways to get to know your park is to join a ranger for a talk, hike, or tour. In spring, summer, and fall look for the schedule of ranger-led activities at entrance stations, visitor centers, and www.nps.gov/shen.



President and Mrs. Hoover relax at their Rapidan Camp.
NPS

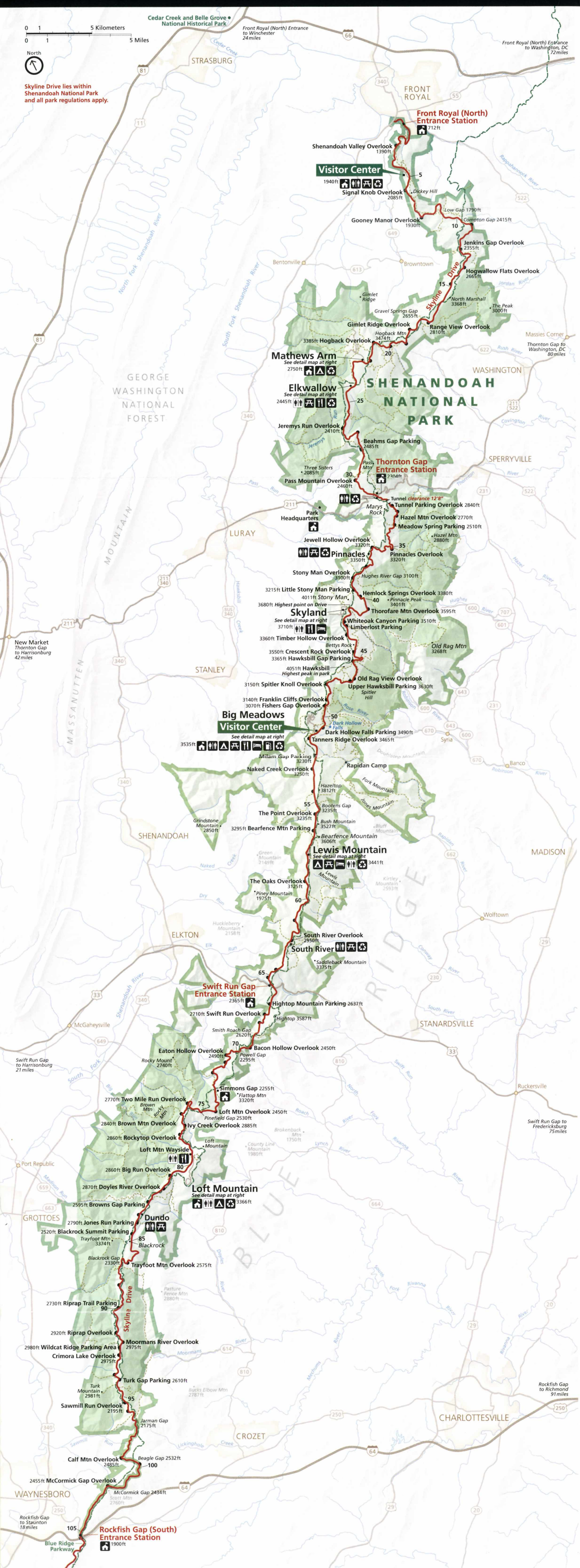


Visit the historic, refurnished Massanutten Lodge at Skyland Resort.
NPS

This historic postcard (*below*) shows Marys Rock Tunnel, built in 1932 on Skyline Drive. It cut through 600 feet of mountain. The clearance is 12 feet, 8 inches.
NPS



Exploring Shenandoah with Your Map and Guide



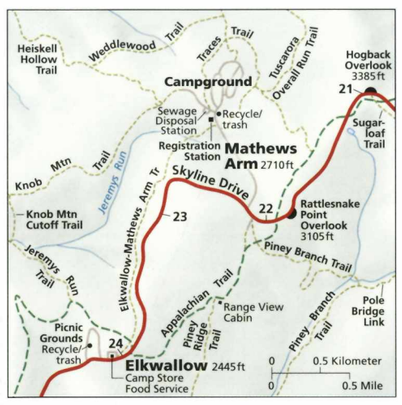
Shenandoah National Park's scenic roadway, Skyline Drive, follows the crest of the Blue Ridge Mountains for 105 miles. At its southern end it joins the Blue Ridge Parkway, which stretches 469 miles to Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Numbered concrete mileposts on the west side of Skyline Drive help you find facilities and services. Mileposts are numbered north to south, and this map is labeled every five miles. Many of the Drive's scenic overlooks are indicated with a black dot. Detail maps show developed areas. More detailed guides and hiking maps are available at entrance stations and visitor centers.

Report all emergencies, injuries, motor vehicle accidents, or violations to a ranger immediately or call 800-732-0911 (emergencies only).

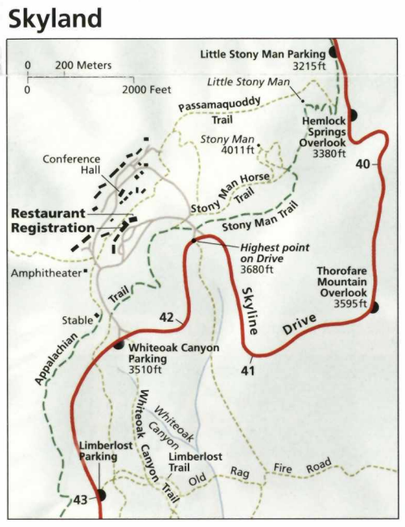
Shenandoah National Park
Wilderness within Shenandoah National Park
50 Skyline Drive milepost
Overlook
Appalachian Trail
Other trail
Ranger station
Restrooms (open all year)
Restrooms (open seasonally)
Picnic grounds
Food service
Lodging
Campground
Gas station
Recycling and trash collection site

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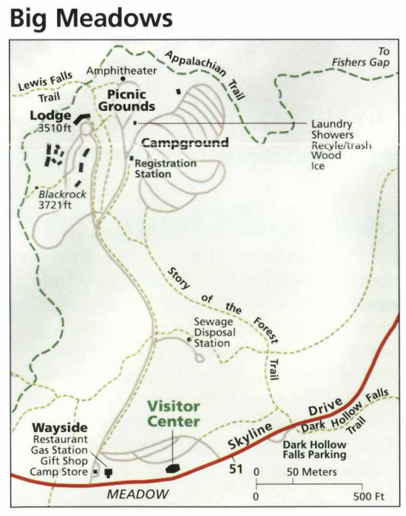
Mathews Arm/Elkwallow



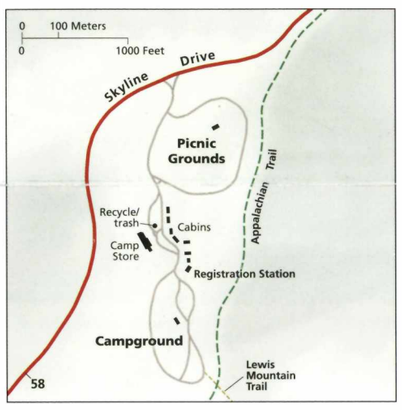
Skyland



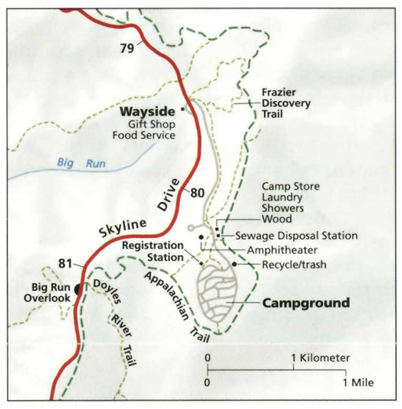
Big Meadows



Lewis Mountain



Loft Mountain



Get the Information You Need

Entrance stations, visitor centers, and other facilities provide information about ranger-led programs, backcountry camping, safety, regulations, and hours of operation. Stop at a visitor center for maps and guides or visit the online bookstore, **www.snpbooks.org**. For planning ahead, visit **www.nps.gov/shen**, the official park website. We strive to make facilities, services, and programs accessible to all. Call, or check the website.

Skyline Drive is a narrow mountain road with beautiful vistas and wildflowers along the shoulders. Take a leisurely drive and pull off at some of our scenic overlooks. Wild animals frequent the Drive's shoulders and may dart across the road, so observe the 35-mile-per-hour speed limit for their safety and yours. Bicyclists, be cautious—shoulders can be narrow, and vehicle drivers may be distracted. Bicycles and all motorized vehicles are limited to paved roads only.

Facilities are generally open spring through fall. Schedules of current hours are at entrance stations and on the park website. For information on concession facilities (lodges, restaurants, etc.) visit **www.goshenandoah.com** or call 877-247-9261.

We have over 500 miles of trails. Detailed maps and guides are available at **www.snpbooks.org** and visitor centers. Day-hike trail maps can be downloaded at **www.nps.gov/shen**. The Potomac Appalachian Trail Club (PATC) operates six cabins (reservations with PATC required) and maintains huts for Appalachian Trail thru-hikers. Contact PATC at **www.patc.net** or 703-242-0315.



Proper food storage is a must! NPS

Who's at Home in the Wild?
The park is a sanctuary that preserves plants, animals, and historic objects. Do not harm or collect what you find. Wildflowers must set seed for next year; artifacts must stay in place to have meaning and to be rediscovered by the next hiker. Fawns and other wild animals are at home here in their natural habitat. Enjoy watching them from a distance.

Feeding wildlife is illegal and unsafe. Some animals appear tame, but all are wild and unpredictable. They can bite, kick, and spread disease. Deer and other animals fed by humans become easy targets for illegal hunters. Bears habituated to human food can become more dangerous and may have to be killed. Don't be a party to their destruction.

Hunting is prohibited in Shenandoah National Park. Fishing requires a valid Virginia fishing license. Ask for a copy of the park fishing brochure.



Discover more to explore at visitor centers: exhibits, films, park store. NPS

Pets
Dogs/pets must be on a leash no longer than six feet. For safety reasons, pets are prohibited on some trails. Check the information at the trailhead. Service animals are allowed.

Be Prepared
Mountain weather can change quickly. Come prepared for cold, wet conditions and fog in any season. Even a warm, sunny day may be followed by a cold night. Bring plenty of water when you hike, and dress appropriately. Be sure to match your hike with your physical abilities. Park staff cannot shuttle hikers.

Stay Safe
Never play at the tops of waterfalls or climb on nearby rocks. • Do not attempt to hike rocky areas that are wet and slippery. • Do not cross swollen streams. • All water except from developed systems must be boiled vigorously for one minute or otherwise treated to be safe for drinking. • Carry valuables with you or lock them in your vehicle out of sight. • Let someone know your itinerary. • Cell service does not work in many areas of the park. • Check thoroughly for ticks. • For a complete list of regulations, including firearms policy, check the park website.

More Information
Shenandoah National Park
3655 US Hwy. 211 East
Luray, VA 22835-9036
540-999-3500
www.nps.gov/shen
Follow us on social media.

Shenandoah National Park is one of over 425 parks in the National Park System. To learn more about national parks visit **www.nps.gov**.

Leave No Trace
Ensuring that future generations can enjoy Shenandoah National Park is everyone's responsibility.

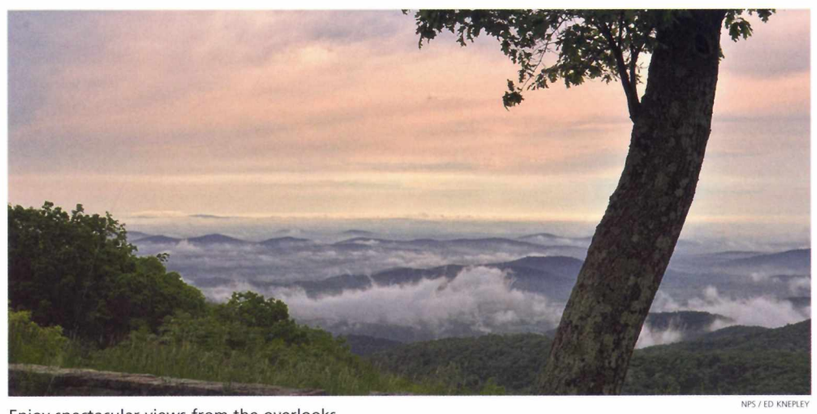
Plan Ahead and Prepare
Travel and Camp on Durable Surfaces: Stay on roads and trails. Trampled vegetation leads to erosion.
Dispose of Waste Properly: Pack it in and pack it out.
Leave What You Find: Taking plants, animals, or cultural artifacts is illegal.
Minimize Campfire Impacts: Build fires only in designated areas with grates.
Respect Wildlife: If an animal changes its behavior because of your presence, you are too close.
Be Considerate of Other Visitors: Leash and control your pet. Let nature's sounds prevail—avoid using loud voices and making loud noises.

Leave No Trace Guidelines: **www.lnt.org**

NPS / ED KNEPLEY



Join a ranger talk to discover hidden treasures. NPS / JOHN F. MITCHELL



Enjoy spectacular views from the overlooks. NPS / ED KNEPLEY



Get the official park app and download offline content to use without a signal. NPS