Mountain folk nicknamed red squirrels “Boomers” because they chatter loud and long whenever they feel their territory is being invaded.

Smokies’ “Boomer” Lives Up to its Name

If you have ever encountered a red squirrel (aka “Boomer”) in the Great Smoky Mountains, you have probably been scolded by a red squirrel in the Great Smoky Mountains. The red squirrel is a highly vocal animal as well as a very territorial one. Perched on a tree limb just beyond your reach, a red squirrel will chatter at you incessantly, determined to make you aware of your trespass on its territory.

With 100 species of native trees and nearly 800 square miles of verdant forest, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is the perfect habitat for an arboreal species like the red squirrel. Almost everything a red squirrel needs can be found among the limbs and branches of a tree. Their preferred foods in this forest buffet include tree buds, hickory nuts, beech nuts, acorns, insects, and seeds from the cones of pine, hemlock, spruce, and fir trees. Red squirrels satisfy their sweet tooth by gnawing into the branch of a sugar maple tree and licking the sap.

A mushroom dangling from a tree limb is a sure sign that a red squirrel has chosen that branch for mushroom storage. This unusual behavior is actually good for forest health because it spreads beneficial fungi.

Red squirrels are found mostly at the park’s mid and higher elevations, especially in the Canadian Zone spruce-fir forest. Unlike gray squirrels, red squirrels are a northern species that reaches the southern edge of their range just south of the Smokies in the highlands of South Carolina.

### RHODODENDRON

All told, ten varieties of native rhododendron can be found in the famously diverse Great Smoky Mountains. The biggest stars in this constellation are Catawba (purple) which blooms at the higher elevations in June, and rosebay (white) which blooms lower down in June and July.

Clingmans Dome and Parson Branch roads are good places to enjoy “rhodo” displays.

Families love Great Smoky Mountains National Park for its variety of hiking trails. To find other great national parks, visit www.nps.gov.

Head Out to “Find Your Park” this Year

Ninety-nine years ago the National Park Service was created to defend Yellowstone and other sites against wildlife poachers and artifact collectors who were hauling away pieces of our national parks and monuments by the wagon load.

Today the same Service protects over 400 parks, seashores, historic sites, battlefields, trails, lakeshores, and other national treasures in such a way as to “leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations.”

In preparation for the 100th birthday of the National Park Service, the agency is encouraging everyone to “Find Your Park.” Public lands belong to everyone, and this is the perfect opportunity to explore new places, whether they are historic sites, forests, parkways, rivers, urban parks, or those “crown jewels” of the national park system like Grand Canyon, Mesa Verde, Everglades, Arches, Yosemite, Olympic, and Gettysburg.

You might be surprised how many beautiful places are preserved by the NPS, even in your own backyard.

Here are just a few of the sites within 100 miles of the Smokies:

- Andrew Johnson National Historic Site
- Appalachian National Scenic Trail
- Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
- Blue Ridge Parkway
- Carl Sandburg Home National Historic Site
- Obed Wild & Scenic River
smokies trip planner

to order maps and guides: www.SmokiesInformation.org

smokies guide

Smokies Guide is produced four times per year by Great Smoky Mountains Association and Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Publication dates are roughly as follows:

SPRING: March 15
SUMMER: June 1
AUTUMN: September 1
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 Abrams Creek and Balsam Mountain campgrounds are open this year.

camping in the national park

The National Park Service maintains developed campgrounds at nine locations in the park. There are no showers or hookups other than circuits for special medical uses at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont.

Campsites at Elkmont, Smokemont, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Cades Cove may be reserved. For reservations call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance. Reservations are required at Cataloochee Campground. Other park campgrounds are first-come, first-serve.

Site occupancy is limited to six people and two vehicles (a trailer = 1 vehicle). The maximum stay is 14 days.

Special camping sites for large groups are available seasonally at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Cosby, Deep Creek, Elkmont, and Smokemont. Group sites must be reserved. Call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Group sites may be reserved up to one year in advance.

The list below shows number of sites, elevations, fees, approximate 2015 operation dates, and maximum RV lengths. Dates are subject to change. Visit www.nps.gov/grsm for current information.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Location</th>
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<tr>
<td>Abrams Creek</td>
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<td>Cades Cove</td>
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<td>Smokemont</td>
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<td>2,150'</td>
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<tr>
<td>Smokemont</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>2,198'</td>
<td>$17-$20</td>
<td>Apr-Oct</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

accommodations

Le Conte Lodge (accessible by trail only) provides the only lodging in the park. Call (865) 429-5704.

For information on lodging outside the park:
Bryson City 1-800-867-9246
Cherokee 1-800-438-1601
Fontana 1-800-849-2258
Gatlinburg 1-800-267-7088
Maggie Valley 1-800-624-4431
Pigeon Forge 1-800-251-9100
Sevierville 1-888-766-5948
Townsend 1-800-525-6834

pets in the park

Pets are allowed in frontcountry campgrounds and beside roads as long as they are restrained at all times. Pets are not allowed on park trails, except for the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails. Dogs on these trails must be leashed.

facility rentals

The historic Appalachian Clubhouse and Spence Cabin at Elkmont are now accepting reservations for day-use rentals. Picnic pavilions are also available for $10-$20 per day at Collins Creek, Cosby, Deep Creek, Greenbrier, Metcalf Bottoms, and Twin Creeks.

To make a reservation, call 1-877-444-6777 or visit www.recreation.gov.

special events

June 20
Womens Work at Oconaluftee Visitor Center

September 19
Mountain Life Festival at Oconaluftee Visitor Center

December 12
Festival of Christmas Past at Sugarlands Visitor Center

picnic areas

Please see pages 8-9 for locations of picnic areas. All picnic areas have charcoal grills for cooking.

visitor centers

Summer hours of operation are: Oconaluftee & Sugarlands: 8-7:30; Clingmans Dome: 10-6; Cades Cove: 9-7:30; Gatlinburg Welcome Center: 8:30-7.

other services

There are no gas stations, showers, or restaurants in the national park. Mt. Le Conte Lodge is the only lodging.

bicycling

Most park roads are too narrow and heavily traveled by automobiles for safe or enjoyable bicycling. However, Cades Cove Loop Road is an exception. This 11-mile, one-way, paved road provides bicyclists with excellent opportunities for viewing wildlife and historic sites.

Helmets are required for persons age 16 and under and are strongly recommended for all bicyclists.

From May 6-Sept. 23, on Wednesday and Saturday mornings from sunrise to 10:00 a.m., only bicycles and pedestrians are allowed on Cades Cove Loop Road. Bicycles may be rented at the Cades Cove Campground store.

Camping in the national park

The National Park Service maintains developed campgrounds at nine locations in the park. There are no showers or hookups other than circuits for special medical uses at Cades Cove, Elkmont, and Smokemont.

Campsites at Elkmont, Smokemont, Cataloochee, Cosby, and Cades Cove may be reserved. For reservations call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Sites may be reserved up to six months in advance. Reservations are required at Cataloochee Campground. Other park campgrounds are first-come, first-serve.

Site occupancy is limited to six people and two vehicles (a trailer = 1 vehicle). The maximum stay is 14 days.

Special camping sites for large groups are available seasonally at Big Creek, Cades Cove, Cataloochee, Cosby, Deep Creek, Elkmont, and Smokemont. Group sites must be reserved. Call 1-877-444-6777 or contact www.recreation.gov. Group sites may be reserved up to one year in advance.
horse riding

Horseback riding is generally available from early March through November. Rates are $30 per hour. Most stables have maximum rider weight limits of 225 or 250 pounds and age restrictions for children. Please call the stables below or stop at a visitor center for detailed information.

Cades Cove (865) 448-9009
cadescovestables.com

Smokemont (828) 497-2373
smokemontridingstables.com

Smoky Mtn. (865) 436-5634
smokemontridingstables.com

Sugarlands (865) 436-3535
sugarlandsridingstables.com

Hayrides and carriage rides ($12 per person) are available from Cades Cove Riding Stable. Wagon rides ($10 per person) are offered at Smokemont. Souvenir photos, tee-shirts, hats, and ice may be available. Soft drink vending is available.

The park service operates horse camps at Cades Cove, Big Creek, Cataloochee, and Round Bottom. Call 877-444-6777 or visit www.Recreation.gov for reservations.

DRIVING

DISTANCES & ESTIMATED TIMES

Cherokee, NC to:
- Cades Cove: 27 miles (1 hour)
- Newfound Gap: 16 miles (½ hour)
- Clingmans Dome: 23 miles (¾ hour)
- Cataloochee: 65 miles (2 hours)
- Greenbrier: 6 miles (¼ hour)
- Deep Creek: 48 miles (1½ hours)

Gatlinburg, TN to:
- Cherokee: 34 miles (1 hour)
- Cades Cove: 34 miles (1 hour)
- Newfound Gap: 18 miles (½ hour)
- Clingmans Dome: 25 miles (¾ hour)
- Cataloochee: 39 miles (1¼ hours)
- Deep Creek: 14 miles (½ hour)

Townsend, TN to:
- Cades Cove: 9 miles (¼ hour)
- Newfound Gap: 34 miles (1¼ hours)
- Gatlinburg: 22 miles (¾ hour)
- Cherokee: 52 miles (1½ hours)
- Look Rock: 18 miles (½ hour)
- Cataloochee: 87 miles (2½ hours)

Backcountry Camping in the Great Smokies

Camping at a backcountry campsite or shelter can be an exciting adventure for persons properly equipped and informed. To facilitate this activity, the National Park Service maintains over 800 miles of trails and more than 100 backcountry campsites and shelters throughout the park. One of the greatest challenges for backcountry campers is deciding where to go. Here are some tools to help.

1. Go online to view the park’s official trail map (www.nps.gov/grsm/planyourvisit/maps.htm), which shows all park trails, campsites, and shelters. Park rules and regulations are also listed here. If you wish, you can purchase the printed version of the trail map for $1 by stopping at any park visitor center or calling (865) 436-7318 x226 or shopping online at www.SmokiesInformation.org.

2. Make your reservation through the backcountry office at Sugarlands Visitor Center (by phone or in person) or online at www.smokiespermits.nps.gov.

3. 3. Make your reservation through the backcountry office at Sugarlands Visitor Center (by phone or in person) or online at www.smokiespermits.nps.gov. Reservations and permits are required for all overnight stays in the backcountry. The cost is $4 per person per night. Reservations may be made up to 30 days in advance.

Rangers will need to rescue over 100 people in the backcountry this year. If you don’t want to be one of them:

• Ditch the sandals. Study hiking boots are the best way to prevent a lower leg injury.

• Know the sun sets. Many hikes turn into rescues because people get caught out on trails after dark without flashlights or headlamps.

• Know your limits. Don’t plan a 15-mile hike unless you are in spectacular physical condition and have done such hikes in mountain terrain recently.

• Prepare for the weather. These mountains are so green because it rains a whole lot here. Always carry rain gear.
if you are in love with
the Great Smoky Mountains...

become a member

Since 1953, Great Smoky Mountains Association has supported the educational, scientific, and historical efforts of the National Park Service through cash donations and in-kind services. In 2015 alone, the association plans to provide more than $1 million in assistance that includes saving hemlock trees, living history demonstrations, environmental education programs, salaries for backcountry patrols, and historic preservation.

Association members receive a number of benefits to keep them informed about special events in the park and issues affecting the Smokies:
- Subscription to the semi-annual, full-color magazine Smokies Life;
- Digital access to the quarterly park newspaper, Smokies Guide, the association’s newsletter, The Bearpaw, and the monthly Club Report;
- A 15-20% discount on books, music, gifts, and other products sold at park visitor centers and at our web store;
- Discounts up to 20% at more than 400 national park bookstores across the country;
- Special discounts at area rental cabins, inns, restaurants, shops, and attractions;
- And most importantly, the satisfaction of helping to preserve nature and history in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

Join today using the coupon to the right or visit www.SmokiesInformation.org, or call us at 1-888-898-9102 x222. Memberships start at just $35 per year.

field school

An exciting variety of adventures await adults who long to get out and explore the park accompanied by expert guides. Programs are offered by the Smoky Mountain Field School and include Mt. Le Conte overnights, wildlife workshops, edible plants, wildflower photography, animal tracking, bird watching, salamanders, mountain cooking, and more. One day programs start at as little as $49. Contact: (865) 974-0150 or smsfutk.edu

gsma at tremont

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont provides residential environmental education programs in Great Smoky Mountains National Park. Up to 5,000 students and adults annually attend workshops and school programs at the Institute. Tremont’s adult workshops include birding, backpacking, environmental education, naturalist weekends, teacher escapes, and photography. Contact (865) 448-6709 or www.smithit.org

summer camps

Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont offers a variety of summer youth camps in the national park. Camps last from 6-11 days and cost from $555. Fees include meals, lodging, and most equipment.

This year’s offerings include: Discovery Camp (ages 9-12), Wilderness Adventure Trek, Girls in Science (ages 12-15), and Teen High Adventure (ages 13-17).

Contact: (865) 448-6709, or www.smithit.org

GSMA MEMBERS

“Get Rooted in the Smokies”

- Acorn (youth) Membership $15
- Buckeye Annual Membership $35
- Chestnut Annual Membership $100
- Dogwood Membership $200
- Hemlock Lifetime Membership $1,000 payable in 5 installments
- Annual Business Membership $250

SIGN ME UP!

Name(s) ____________________________

Address ____________________________________________

Email (for Club Report) ____________________________

Telephone # ____________________________

Please include your check with this form. Mail to:

GSMA, P.O. Box 130, Gatlinburg, TN 37738. 1-888-898-9102

support the friends

Friends of Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a nonprofit organization that assists the National Park Service by raising funds and public awareness and providing volunteers for park projects.

Since 1993, Friends has raised over $34 million for park projects and programs. These donations help:
- protect elk, bear, brook trout, and other wildlife;
- improve trails, campsites, and backcountry shelters;
- support educational programs for school children;
- improve visitor facilities;
- fund special educational services like the park movie;
- preserve log cabins and other historic structures.

Your donation can help make these projects a reality. Put a few coins or a few dollars in one of the donation boxes located at visitor centers, roadsides, and other locations around the park. Buy the Smokies license plate for your car (available in Tennessee and North Carolina).

However you choose to give, your donation will really help protect the Great Smoky Mountains for many years to come!

Friends of the Smokies
P.O. Box 1660
Kodak, TN 37764
(865) 932-4794
1-800-845-5665
www.friendsofthesmokies.org
New Firewood Regulation Will Help Protect Forests from Alien Invaders

Great Smoky Mountains National Park officials have enacted regulations that will help protect park forests by restricting the type of firewood brought into the park. Beginning this spring, only heat-treated firewood that is bundled and displays a certification stamp by the USDA or a state department of agriculture will be allowed in park campgrounds.

Heat-treated firewood is now for sale from concessioners in many of the park campgrounds as well as from private businesses in the communities around the park. Certified heat-treated firewood is packaged in 0.75 cu-ft. bundles clearly displaying a certification stamp.

The wood is a high-quality hardwood product that has been heated for 60 minutes at 140 degrees Fahrenheit. The wood lights easily, burns well for campfires, is safe to cook over, and is already available at over 85 locations near the park that can be viewed on an interactive map at www.nps.gov/firewoodmap. In addition, visitors may still collect dead and down wood in the park for campfires.

“The threat of these new pests coming into our forests, both in the park and regionally, compels us to do all we can to reduce the risk to our forests,” said Deputy Superintendent Clayton Jordan. “While a ban on the importation of non-treated firewood will not entirely halt the spread of forest pests and diseases, it will greatly slow it down. This allows us time to develop and implement new treatment strategies.”

Non-native, tree-killing insects and diseases can unknowingly be introduced through firewood transported from infested areas. A variety of destructive pests lay eggs or stowaway in firewood. These insects from Asia and Europe have the potential to devastate over 40 species of hardwood trees native to the Smokies.
For at least a century before the Great Smokies became a national park, livestock were driven up onto the grassy balds every summer to fatten on the flavorful forage. Herders kept watch over cattle, sheep, hogs, and a few horses and mules, and in the fall they rounded up all the animals and brought them down to market.

This tradition of grazing goes back at least to the early 1800s, and possibly even earlier. Native Americans may have grazed animals on the balds—historians say the Cherokee held communal grazing lands, and leased pastures to farmers to range their cattle as well.

And it’s certain that the earliest white settlers saw the value of that grazing land and put it to use. With their Scotch-Irish heritage, they found it fairly easy to adapt their old-country, upland grazing methods to the new environment of the Smokies. Because of the large number of livestock sent to the highlands, places like Spence Field, Andrews Bald, and Gregory Bald were kept grassy and free of trees.

Grazing livestock on the high country was a seasonal ritual. Come April or early May, word rippled through surrounding towns and valleys that it was time to ready the livestock for their journey. To tell one owner’s animals from another, they nipped distinctive notches or impressed tattoos into the ears. Most of the cattle and sheep also had bells around their necks. As many as 50 families mingled their livestock and sheep for the long migration. By the time all were assembled, there would be several hundred head of cattle—steers, heifers, cows, some blackface, whiteface, and good old mountain mixed-breeds. Add in sheep, hogs, horses and mules—and the usual noisy entourage of barking dogs and shouting and whistling drovers—and it was quite the procession.

Herds headed for Spence and Russell fields went up to the crest by way of the Bote Mountain Road. Those bound for Gregory or Parson took the Cooper and Rich Mountain roads into Cades Cove, and continued along Forge Creek or the Fork Ridge Trail. After reaching the top, the animals were let loose to wander at will, feeding on the native mountain oat grass and enjoying the pleasant breezes and lack of bugs at 5,000 feet elevation. It was heaven on earth for a cow. Men hired on as herders and charged a nominal sum per head. Dan Myers, Fonze Cable, Granville Calhoun, George Tipton, and Tom Sparks were among the best-known. Some herders went back and forth to the balds to tend the animals, while others lived up there all summer in cabins they built beside springs. Spence Cabin and Hall Cabin were notable. All these structures are gone now, but photographs show them as small log cabins of one or two rooms, with a fireplace and simple furnishings. The herder would keep a loyal dog, and maybe a cat, for company. They had a few visitors too, as hunters and hikers stopped in along the way.

Some herders cleared a garden patch and grew potatoes and cabbage to supplement the standard fare of cornbread, fatback, and beans. And nearly every one of them hunted wild game, to vary the monotonous diet and probably to help pass the long hours. One nice fall day, Granville Calhoun and his father-in-law, Crate Hall, went out searching for some strays. Meeting some other men, they completely forgot about the cattle and commenced hunting. It was a good day’s harvest: nearly a dozen wild turkey, a buck deer, one bear, a groundhog, raccoons, several squirrels, and a grouse.

Seymour Calhoun helped his father herd. They ran their own cattle and those of others at the same time, he said, “anywhere from five to seven or eight hundred head” from Clingmans Dome west for about 16 miles to Spence Field. Lightning was a real threat to animals standing out on the open balds. Randolph Shields said his family received word that lightning had killed most of their sheep at Ekaneetlee Gap. His grandmother took everyone up, and they pulled the wool off the carcasses because it was too valuable to waste.

Bears could be a problem, mostly for calves and sheep, but in pre-park days the bear population was much sparser than it is today. If a herder did hear of a marauding bear, though, he’d form a hunting party and go get it.

Poisonous plants, especially mountain laurel, or “ivy,” were to be avoided. The cattle wore muzzles of leather bark, or wire to prevent their nibbling laurel along the trail. “It’d kill them” if they ate it, said Uncle Jim Shelton, who started herding as a teenager with Granville Calhoun.

Come the first of September, it was time for “the gathering” or roundup—all the cattle and sheep had to be collected, counted, separated according to ownership, and readied for the trip back down the mountains. This was the only count that was done, said Asa Sparks, but it was an important one because this was when the herder discovered if any animals in his charge were lost or missing. If any were unaccounted for, he had to go find them. Randolph Shields said he and Kermit Caughron combed the thick-wooded hollows of the Twenty-Mile area for three days just to find three missing cows.

But by the 1930s, people had begun to place a different value on the Great Smoky Mountains. The range was about to become a new national park. Grazing, and other uses considered incompatible with the park, would no longer be allowed. The last holdout was John Oliver, who took some of his cattle up on the balds above Cades Cove for the last time in 1936.
hit the trail

Day hiking in the Smokies is a fun way for families to escape the car and enjoy the great outdoors.

Great Hikes for Families

With over 800 miles of gorgeous hiking trails to choose from, Great Smoky Mountains National Park is a wonderland for families who want to escape from the car and busy roadways and experience the peace and beauty of the Smokies. Hiking is not only great for your health, it gives families the opportunity for bonding and shared adventures that will be remembered for a lifetime.

Perhaps the best way for families with younger children to hike the Smokies is on one of the park’s self-guiding nature trails shown on the map above. Each offers an inexpensive brochure and numbered posts that help you learn about some of the things you see along the way. Many are loop trails. Mileages shown are round trip.

Quiet Walkways are another great way to stretch your legs and enjoy the Smokies backcountry. Look for signs along park roadways to find these short gems. A few are loop trails, but most are not, so you just walk a ways, then return the way you came.

Get Your Kids Hiking!

This summer, family hiking expert and author of Get Your Kids Hiking, Jeff Alt, teams up with Great Smoky Mountains National Park rangers to lead kids and accompanying adults on a short hike loaded with hands-on family hiking tips and ways to explore the outdoors. Learn how a few simple techniques and some basic equipment can turn any walk in the woods into a safe, fun-filled adventure. Come prepared for a 1 hour easy walk (less than one mile). Programs are open to children of all ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult/caregiver.

- Saturday, June 20, 10:30 a.m., Location: Sugarlands Visitor Center
- Saturday, July 18, 11:00 a.m. Location: Oconaluftee Visitor Center
- Saturday, October 10, 10:30 a.m. Location: Sugarlands Visitor Center

Don’t forget to pick up a Hike the Smokies—FOR FAMILIES log book to keep track of your hikes and earn cool stickers and pins for the miles you cover. Available for $1 at park visitor centers.

Scavenger Hike Adventures are 13 hikes especially for families who want to engage their kids in searching for clues and hidden wonders as they walk park trails. Your kids will look for such treasures as a wrecked steam engine, a tree marked by bear claws, remains of an old Model T, and historic log cabins. Available at park visitor centers or by visiting www.SmokiesInformation.org.
Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail: Paved, narrow, 5.5-mile one-way road offers old-growth forest, waterfalls, and historic buildings.

Closed: Alum Cave Trail will be closed Mon.-Thurs. during summer.

Newfound Gap Road: This paved road is the only route over the Great Smoky Mountains. It stretches for 31 miles between Gatlinburg and Cherokee and climbs from an elevation of 1,300' to 5,046' (at Newfound Gap).

Cataloochee Valley: 8 miles from I-40 (including 3 miles on a narrow gravel road). The short road through the valley offers wildlife viewing (including elk) and access to a historic church, school, and homes.

Clingmans Dome Road: 7-mile paved road leads to the Clingmans Dome trailhead. A very steep, half-mile walk takes you to Clingmans Dome tower and the highest point in the Smokies (6,643').

Roaring Fork Motor Nature Trail (closed in winter)

Restrooms are available at all park campgrounds, visitor centers, picnic areas, Newfound Gap, and Great Smoky Mountains Institute at Tremont. Vault toilets, port-a-johns, and other facilities are also available at some of the most popular trailheads, including Clingmans Dome, Rainbow Falls, Grotto Falls, Abrams Falls, and the Townsend "Wye."

Horseback Riding (rental)
Picnic Areas
Camping
Nature Trails
Major Hwys
Major Roads
Paved Roads
Gravel Roads
Trails
Spring Auto Tours
Great Mountain Views

www.SmokiesInformation.org, Summer 2015 - 9
great things to do

Programs and activities in Great Smoky Mountains National Park.

JUNE 14 - AUGUST 8, 2015

Park visitor centers are located at Cades Cove, Oconaluftee, Clingmans Dome, and Sugarlands. All offer information, exhibits, and publications related to the park and its resources.

Accessible to persons using wheelchairs.

Families who hike in the Smokies can now earn special stickers and collector pins as rewards. Pick up a “Hike the Smokies—For Families” booklet at any park visitor center to learn more.

CADES COVE

Because of slow moving traffic, it may take over an hour to drive the six miles from the start of Cades Cove Loop Road to programs at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill Historic Area.

Sundays

Junior Ranger Program: Blue & Gray
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Loop Road 1:00 p.m.
The Civil War needs young folks to enlist for the Union or Confederacy! As a recruit you will learn about the life of a soldier. Join a Park Ranger to see how the Civil War affected communities such as Cades Cove.
Duration: 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy

WILD by Design
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Loop Road 2:30 p.m.
A talk and hands-on demonstration about the wild things in the park.
Duration: 30 – 45 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Tuesdays

Junior Ranger Program: Blacksmithing
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 10:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m., 2:00 p.m., 3:00 p.m.
This interactive fun activity compares your abilities to the animals of the park.
Duration: 45 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Animal Olympics
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 10:30 a.m. & 1:00 p.m.
This interactive fun activity compares your abilities to the animals of the park.
Duration: 45 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger Program: Blue & Gray
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 11:30 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.
The Civil War needs young folks to enlist for the Union or Confederacy! As a recruit you will learn about the life of a soldier. Join a Park Ranger to see how the Civil War affected communities such as Cades Cove.
Duration: 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy

Cades Cove Night Hike
Meet at the Orientation shelter at the entrance to the Cades Cove Loop Road 9:00 p.m.
Listen to the spirits of Cades Cove. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.
Duration: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy, 2.5 miles

Wednesdays

Junior Ranger Program: Ranger’s Choice
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area halfway around the Loop Road 1:00 p.m.
Bring the family for a hands-on exploration of the Smokies. Participation counts towards credit for earning a Junior Ranger badge and certificate.
Duration: 45 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger Program: Blue & Gray
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center area halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 2:30 p.m.
A talk and hands-on demonstration about the wild things in the park.

Most ranger-guided programs are free of charge.
**Cove. Hayrides can fill up quickly, first-come, first-wildlife and discovering the diversity of life in the**

**Join a ranger for an evening open air hayride viewing**

5:00 p.m.  
**Cades Cove Evening Hayride**

Difficulty: 30 minutes  
Duration: 2 hours  

- **Easy**

**Cades Cove Full Moon Hike**

Meet at the Orientation Shelter at the entrance to the Cades Cove Loop Road  
8:30 p.m. Saturday, August 29  
Wear comfortable walking shoes. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.  
**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Difficulty:** Easy, 2 mile walk

- **Moderate, less than 1 mile**
- **Easy**

**Blacksmith Demonstrations**

Saturday & Sunday, May 23 & 24  
Saturday & Sunday, June 6 & 7  
Saturday & Sunday, July 4 & 5, 25 & 26  
Saturday & Sunday, August 8 & 9  
10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.  
**Meet at the Blacksmith building near the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area**

Learn the art of blacksmithing and why it was important in the Cades Cove community.  

- **Easy**

**Old-Time Toy Demonstration**

Wednesdays, May 27 – August 5  
11:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
**Meet at the Blacksmith building near the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area**

See how wooden toys were used back in Cades Cove’s earlier days.

**Shaped-Note Singing School**

**Sunday, July 12 at 2:00 p.m.**

Singing schools in the mountains were scheduled when people were not occupied with their work. Usually held when the “literary” schools were adjourned; singing schools taught the rudiments of music to the general population by the use of shape notes (also know as Old Harp singing). Come and participate or just listen. Songbooks will be provided.  
**Duration:** 2 hours

**Back Porch Old-Time Music Jam**

Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center  
1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. Saturdays, June 6 & 20, July 4 & 18, and August 1 & 15  
Bring an acoustic instrument and join in on this old-time jam. Or just sit back and enjoy the sights and sounds as others play traditional Appalachian music.

- **Return of the Elk**

**Cataloochee Valley, Rough Fork Trailhead**  
3:00 p.m. Tuesdays, July 7 & July 14  
Come enjoy a guided hike to where the elk acclimation pen was located and explore how, when, and why the elk returned to the Smokies.  
**Duration:** 1.5 hours  
**Difficulty:** Moderate, less than 1 mile

**SPECIAL SUMMER FAMILY HIKES**

**Get Your Kids Hiking!**  
This short family stroll turns a walk in the park into a fun-filled, multi-dimensional adventure. Family hiking expert and author of Get Your Kids Hiking, Jeff Alt, teams up with Great Smoky Mountains National Park Rangers to lead kids and accompanying adults on a short hike loaded with hands-on family hiking tips and ways to explore the outdoors. Learn how a few simple techniques and some basic equipment can turn any walk in the woods into a safe, fun-filled adventure. Come prepared for a 1 hour easy walk. Walks that are less than one mile are open to children of all ages. Children must be accompanied by an adult.  
- **Saturday, June 20, 10:30 a.m. at Sugarlands Visitor Center**  
- **Saturday, July 18, 11:00 a.m. at Oconaluftee Visitor Center**  
- **Saturday, October 10, 10:30 a.m. at Sugarlands Visitor Center**

**Family Hike Series**

Join a Ranger to become more confident traversing the trails with the whole family. This hike series is designed to help you and your children build on your skills and get comfortable planning future trips to the park. Children must be accompanied by an adult/caregiver. **Sign up at Sugarlands Visitor Center to ensure a spot for your entire family!**

- **-Tuesday, June 23 at 10:30 a.m. **
  **Hike to Fern Branch Falls along Porters Creek**  
Enjoy this walk along beautiful Porters Creek to explore the Smokies’ history, wildflowers and waterfalls. Learn about hiking in the Smokies and how hikers played a role in the preservation of the Park. Bring a picnic lunch. Recommended for youth ages 5 – 8. Maximum of 30 participants.  
**Distance:** 3.6 miles round-trip  
**Difficulty:** Easy to Moderate  
**Duration:** 3- 3.5 hours

- **-Tuesday, July 21 at 10:00 a.m.**  
  **Hike to Hen Wallow Falls**  
Beat the crowds at this “hidden gem” and see a beautiful waterfall, search for salamanders, and see some of the Smokies’ oldest trees. Bring a picnic lunch. Recommended for youth ages 7 – 10. Maximum of 30 participants.  
**Distance:** 4.3 miles round-trip  
**Difficulty:** Moderate  
**Duration:** 4 hours

- **-Tuesday, August 11 at 9:00 a.m.**  
  **Hike to the Chimney Tops**  
Get your heart pumping on this very, very steep hike. If the climb doesn’t take your breath away the view from the Chimney Tops surely will! Bring a picnic lunch. Recommended for youth ages 10 and up. Maximum of 25 participants.  
**Distance:** 4 miles round-trip  
**Difficulty:** Strenuous with rock scrambling  
**Duration:** 4 hours

**Cades Cove Riding Stables**

Meet at Cades Cove Riding Stables  
8:00 p.m.  
**Cades Cove Evening Hayride**

Join a ranger for an evening open air hayride viewing wildlife and discovering the diversity of life in the Cove. Hayrides can fill up quickly, first-come, first-serve for this program.  
**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Fee:** $14.00/person

**Thursdays**

**I Remember When**

Meet at the Cades Cove amphitheater next to the campground store  
9:00 p.m.  
**Meet at Cades Cove Riding Stables**

8:00 a.m.  
**Early Bird Hayride**

Explore the Smokies and create family memories to take home and last a lifetime.  
**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Fridays**

**Early Bird Hayride**

Meet at Cades Cove Riding Stables  
8:00 a.m.
Join a park ranger for an early morning hayride viewing wildlife and discovering the diversity of life in the Cove.

**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Fee:** $14.00/person

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**Junior Ranger Program: Ranger’s Choice**  
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area, halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 1:00 p.m.

Bring the family for a hands-on exploration of the Smokies. Participation counts towards credit for earning a Junior Ranger badge and certificate.

**Duration:** 30 – 45 minutes  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**Cades Cove Night Hike**  
Meet at the Orientation shelter at the entrance to the Cades Cove Loop Road 9:00 p.m.

Listen to the spirits of Cades Cove. Children under 14 must be accompanied by an adult.

**Duration:** 2 hours  
**Difficulty:** Easy, 2.5 miles

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**Saturdays**

**Junior Ranger: Animal Olympics**  
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center/Cable Mill area, halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 1:00 p.m.

This interactive fun activity compares your abilities to the animals of the park.

**Duration:** 45 minutes  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**WILD by Design**  
Meet at the Cades Cove Visitor Center area halfway around the Cades Cove Loop Road 2:30 p.m.

A talk and hands-on demonstration about the wild things in the park.

**Duration:** 30 minutes  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**GATLINBURG/ SUGARLANDS AREA**

**Daily**

**Cataract Falls**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 11:30 a.m.

Join a ranger on a short walk to discover why the Smokies is special in the summer. Topics may include waterfalls, wildflowers, trees, history, salamanders, and birds.

**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**Sundays**

**A Wondrous Diversity of Life**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

**Duration:** 45 minutes

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**Mondays**

**Junior Ranger: Bein’ A Kid in the Mountains**  
Sugarlands Visitor Center 10:30 a.m.

What was it like to grow up in these mountains before any of the modern conveniences we enjoy today? Join a Ranger to experience how life used to be in these mountains, including how kids explored and what they liked to do for fun.

**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**A Wondrous Diversity of Life**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

**Duration:** 45 minutes

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**Tuesdays**

**Junior Ranger: Yucky Animal Stuff**  
Sugarlands Visitor Center 10:00 a.m.

Want to know some gross stuff about animals? Check out some skulls, smells, and scat. Learn some disgusting facts. Join a ranger for this fun and entertaining program.

**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**Junior Ranger: Find Your Park**  
Sugarlands Visitor Center 1:00 p.m.

Join a Ranger for a look into National Parks across the country and find out which one might be yours!

**Duration:** 1 hour  
**Difficulty:** Easy

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**Wednesdays**

**Early Bird Hike: Laurel Falls & Old-Growth Forest**  
Laurel Falls Trailhead 8:00 a.m.

Enjoy one of the Smokies most popular hikes well before the crowds arrive, and beat the heat of summer, too. Hike to Laurel Falls and beyond to some of the Smokies most accessible, remaining old-growth forest.

**Duration:** 2.5 hours  
**Level:** Moderate, 3 miles

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**Thursdays**

**Highland Homeland**  
Noah Bud Ogle Cabin (from downtown Gatlinburg, turn at traffic light #8, and follow Airport Road—Historic Nature Trail into the park) 2:00 p.m.

SIT a spell on the front porch of the Ogle cabin and learn about the families who once lived here. Demonstrations and activities will vary throughout the season.

**Duration:** 45 Minutes  
**Level:** Easy

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**Fridays**

**A Wondrous Diversity of Life**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 2:00 p.m.

Come learn more about reintroduced species, non-native insects, slimy salamanders or the secret lives of bears. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be amazed by the Smokies biodiversity.

**Duration:** 45 minutes

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**Saturdays**

**Junior Ranger: Bear-mania!**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 2:00 p.m.

So you think you know a lot about bears, huh? Well join a ranger to test your knowledge and learn more about this “symbol of the Smokies.”

**Duration:** 45 minutes

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**See the Stars in the Smokies**  
Meet at Sugarlands Visitor Center 8:30 p.m.

Come learn the stories of some of the most popular constellations and enjoy the dark sky that only National Parks can provide. Use a telescope to get up-close and personal with the stars. Maximum of 40 participants. Sign-up at Sugarlands Visitor Center is first come, first serve, beginning on Friday morning preceding the program.

**Duration:** 1.5 hours  
**Difficulty:** Easy
**ELKMONT/LITTLE GREENBRIER/METCALF BOTTOMS AREA**

**Sundays**
**Elkmont Campfire Program**
Elkmont Campground Amphitheater
8:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a National Park tradition—the evening campfire program. Topics vary, but you’re guaranteed to learn something new about the Great Smoky Mountains.
**Difficulty:** Easy
**Duration:** 1 hour

**Elkmont Campground Hike for Families**
Elkmont Campground Amphitheater
3:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger on a hike to the highest peak in the park to take in 360° views and learn about the unique Canadian Zone environment. Discover some of the park’s most influential people, or hear stories behind the park’s place names. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be inspired by the stories behind the scenery.
**Difficulty:** Moderate
**Duration:** 1.5 hours

**Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area Pavilion Hike**
Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area Pavilion
1:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a National Park tradition—the evening campfire program. Topics vary, but you’re guaranteed to learn something new about the Great Smoky Mountains.
**Difficulty:** Easy
**Duration:** 1 hour

**Mondays**
**Junior Ranger: Creepy Critters**
Elkmont Amphitheater
1:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger on this adventure into the dark and mysterious world of bugs and macro-invertebrates. Get up close and personal with the use of equipment such as “sucky-uppy-things”, leaf litter boxes and magnifying glasses.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Junior Ranger: School Days at Little Greenbrier**
Little Greenbrier Schoolhouse
11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.
Go back in time to discover what it was like to live in a mountain community and go to school in a one-room schoolhouse. Fun for all ages. Please arrive 15 minutes before program start; space is limited.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Wednesdays**
**Junior Ranger: Stream Splashers**
Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area Pavilion
10:30 a.m.
Roll up your pants and wade through a mountain stream to look for mayflies, stoneflies, dragonflies, and other aquatic critters. Be prepared to get wet. Closed-toed shoes that can get wet are recommended.
**Duration:** 1 – 1.5 hours
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Junior Ranger: Family Adventure – Schoolhouse Hike**
Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area Pavilion
1:00 p.m.
Not sure how to explore the Smokies with the whole family? Learn hiking basics that are Ranger tested and kid approved as we hike along a mountain stream to a one-room schoolhouse where we will learn what it is was like to be a student “back then.” Wear sturdy hiking boots and bring plenty of water.
**Duration:** 2 hours
**Difficulty:** Easy, 1.5 miles

**CLINGMANS DOME/NEWFOUND GAP AREA**

**Sundays**
**Junior Ranger: Geology Rocks!**
Meet at Newfound Gap Overlook
2:00 p.m.
Amaze your friends with newfound knowledge about how these mountains were born and how they have changed over time.
**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Mondays**
**Islands in the Sky**
Viewing Area below Clingmans Dome Visitor Center
1:00 p.m.
Toss your day pack in the car and join a Ranger on a 3.6 mile round trip stroll through one of the Smoky Mountains’ best-known ecosystems. This hike will take you out to Andrews Bald on a moderate trail that loses about 600 feet in elevation. Enjoy a leisurely hike back to the parking lot on your own after reaching the bald. Sturdy footwear, a snack, and water recommended.
**Difficulty:** Moderate, 3.6 miles

**Fridays**
**Elkmont Campfire Program**
Elkmont Campground Amphitheater
8:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a National Park tradition—the evening campfire program. Topics vary, but you’re guaranteed to learn something new about the Great Smoky Mountains.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Clingmans Dome Sunset Hike**
Clingmans Dome Parking Lot, Forney Ridge Trailhead
8:00 p.m. (June 19th – July 17th)
7:30 p.m. (July 24th – August 14th)
Walk with a Ranger up the Clingmans Dome Trail as the light fades from the sky. Enjoy the sun setting from the highest peak in Tennessee and walk back down amongst the stars. Group Limit is 50. Sign-up at Sugarlands Visitor Center starting on the Wednesday preceding the program.
**Duration:** 1.5 hours
**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Saturdays**
**On Top of Old Smoky**
Clingmans Dome Visitor Center
8:00 p.m.
Meet Clingmans Dome Visitor Center.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy

**Clingmans Dome Parking Lot, Forney Ridge Trailhead**
**Clingmans Dome Overlook at Sunset**
8:00 p.m. (June 19th – July 17th)
7:30 p.m. (July 24th – August 14th)
Walk with a Ranger up the Clingmans Dome Trail as the light fades from the sky. Enjoy the sun setting from the highest peak in Tennessee and walk back down amongst the stars. Group Limit is 50. Sign-up at Sugarlands Visitor Center starting on the Wednesday preceding the program.
**Duration:** 1.5 hours
**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Fridays**
**Clingmans Dome Sunset Hike**
Clingmans Dome Parking Lot, Forney Ridge Trailhead
8:00 p.m. (June 19th – July 17th)
7:30 p.m. (July 24th – August 14th)
Walk with a Ranger up the Clingmans Dome Trail as the light fades from the sky. Enjoy the sun setting from the highest peak in Tennessee and walk back down amongst the stars. Group Limit is 50. Sign-up at Sugarlands Visitor Center starting on the Wednesday preceding the program.
**Duration:** 1.5 hours
**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Saturdays**
**On Top of Old Smoky**
Clingmans Dome Visitor Center
8:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger on a hike to the highest peak in the park to take in 360° views and learn about the unique Canadian Zone environment. Discover some of the park’s most influential people, or hear stories behind the park’s place names. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be inspired by the stories behind the scenery.
**Difficulty:** 1.5 hours
**Duration:** Moderate

The high elevation forest of the Smokies is one of the most interesting and endangered ecosystems in the Eastern U.S. Come learn more about what makes this beautiful area unique.
**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Tuesdays**
**Andrews Bald Hike for Families**
Clingmans Dome Parking Lot, Forney Ridge Trailhead
10:00 a.m.
Toss your day pack in the car and join a Ranger on a 3.6 mile round trip stroll through one of the Smoky Mountains’ best-known ecosystems. This hike will take you out to Andrews Bald on a moderate trail that loses about 600 feet in elevation. Enjoy a leisurely hike back to the parking lot on your own after reaching the bald. Sturdy footwear, a snack, and water recommended.
**Duration:** 3 hours
**Difficulty:** Moderate

**Islands in the Sky**
Viewing Area below Clingmans Dome Visitor Center
1:00 p.m.
The high elevation forest of the Smokies is one of the most interesting and endangered ecosystems in the Eastern U.S. Come to learn more about makes this beautiful area unique.
**Duration:** 45 minutes

**Thursdays**
**Junior Ranger: Creepy Critters**
Metcalf Bottoms Picnic Area Pavilion
10:00 a.m.
Join a Ranger on this adventure into the dark and mysterious world of bugs and macro-invertebrates. Get up close and personal with the use of equipment such as “sucky-uppy-things”, leaf litter boxes and magnifying glasses.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy, 0.5 mile

**Junior Ranger: Family Adventure – Advent Cabin**
Elkmont: Lakes Creek Trailhead
1:00 p.m.
Not sure how to explore the Smokies with the whole family? Learn hiking basics that are Ranger tested and kid approved as we hike up an old railroad grade. Our final destination will be a pre-park historic cabin, hidden off any established trail. Wear sturdy hiking boots and bring plenty of water.
**Duration:** 2 hours
**Difficulty:** Easy, 2.5 miles

**Junior Ranger: School Days at Little Greenbrier**
11:00 a.m. & 2:00 p.m.
Go back in time to discover what it was like to live in a mountain community and go to school in a one-room schoolhouse. Fun for all ages. Please arrive 15 minutes before program start; space is limited.
**Difficulty:** Easy

**FRIDAYS**
**Elkmont Campfire Program**
Elkmont Campground Amphitheater
8:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a National Park tradition—the evening campfire program. Topics vary, but you’re guaranteed to learn something new about the Great Smoky Mountains.
**Duration:** 1 hour
**Difficulty:** Easy
10:00 a.m.
Join a Ranger on a hike to the highest peak in the park to take in 360° views and learn about the unique Canadian Zone environment. Discover some of the park’s most influential people, or hear stories behind the park’s place names. Topics vary, but you’re sure to be inspired by the stories behind the scenery.
Duration: 1.5 hours
Difficulty: Moderate

OCONALUFTEE/SMOKEMONT AREA

Daily

Mingus Mill Demonstration
Located a half-mile north of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center on US 441 (Newfound Gap Road)
9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
Chat with a miller and feel the rumble of this historic gristmill in action.

Mountain Farm Museum
Adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Dawn to Dusk
Walk down to the farm for a glimpse into the past. Self-guiding brochures are always available and some days you may find demonstrations such as blacksmithing, hearth cooking, gardening, or weaving taking place.

Sundays

Endangered Species
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
11:30 a.m.
How can you help ensure Great Smoky Mountains doesn’t lose any plants or animals? Join a ranger to learn how to protect all the park has to offer!
Duration: 45 minutes

Down on the Farm
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 21 from 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.
Walk down to the farm and see the kinds of activities 19th century families may have been engaged with, such as hearth cooking, woodworking, or gardening. Demonstration activities vary.
Duration: On-going for 2 hours

From Snout to Tail...Everything But the Squeal!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 21 at 5:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger on the farm to learn about the mountain farmer’s “best friend.”
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Night Hike
Bradley Fork Trailhead, D-Loop Smokemont
Starting June 21 at 8:45 p.m.
Ever wonder what goes “grrr” in the night? What creatures are out there moving under the cover of darkness? Take a walk on the dark side with a Ranger and learn about some of the mysteries and wonders found only after the sun goes down. Limited to 25 participants. Call (828) 497-1904 up to four days in advance to make reservations.
Duration: Approximately 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy, less than 1 mile

Mondays

Kephart Prong Trail Hike
Kephart Prong Trailhead on Newfound Gap Road
10:00 a.m.
Starting June 22 at 9:30 a.m.
Join a Ranger and explore the remains of an old logging camp, which later became a Civilian Conservation Corp camp. Discover what signs are still visible and what life was like.
Duration: 2 hours
Difficulty: Easy to moderate, less than 2 miles

Old-Time Mountain Religion
Smokemont Baptist Church near Smokemont
Campground entrance
Starting June 22 at 11:00 a.m.
Join a Ranger and discover how old-time mountain religion met spiritual, social, and community needs.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Welcome Home!
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
2:00 p.m.
After more than a century of absence, the elk have returned. Relax, have a seat on the visitor center porch and hear the story of the return of the largest mammal to the Great Smoky Mountains.
Duration: 45 minutes

You’re Not Wanted Here
Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 22 at 4:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger on the visitor center porch to discover things you may not know about two unwanted visitors to the park.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You’ll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 45 minutes

Tuesdays

Salamanders!
Mingus Mill Parking Area
10:00 a.m.
Join a Ranger to explore the world of salamanders. Participants learn why the Smokies are the Salamander Capital of the World as we search for and collect monitoring data on these sometimes elusive critters.
Duration: 1.5 hours; Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Stream Splatters
Oconaluftee River adjacent to the Mountain Farm Museum
2:00 p.m.
Roll up your pants and wade through a mountain stream to look for mayflies, stoneflies, dragonflies, and other aquatic critters. Be prepared to get wet. Closed toe shoes recommended.
Duration: 1.5 hours
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Find Your Park
Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 23 at 3:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a look into National Parks across the country and find out which one might be yours!
Duration: 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You’ll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 30 minutes

Welcome Home!
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
Starting June 23 at 3:00 p.m.
After more than a century of absence, the elk have returned. Relax, have a seat on the visitor center porch and hear the story of the return of the largest mammal to the Great Smoky Mountains.
Duration: 45 minutes

Black Bears in the Smokies
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
5:00 p.m.
There’s danger everywhere, high and low but always close especially if you’re an American ursus. Learn how we are the greatest danger to the American black bear.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Stream Splatters
Oconaluftee River adjacent to the Mountain Farm Museum
2:00 p.m.
Roll up your pants and wade through a mountain stream to look for mayflies, stoneflies, dragonflies, and other aquatic critters. Be prepared to get wet. Closed toe shoes recommended.
Duration: 1.5 hours
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Find Your Park
Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 23 at 3:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a look into National Parks across the country and find out which one might be yours!
Duration: 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You’ll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 30 minutes

Welcome Home!
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
Starting June 23 at 3:00 p.m.
After more than a century of absence, the elk have returned. Relax, have a seat on the visitor center porch and hear the story of the return of the largest mammal to the Great Smoky Mountains.
Duration: 45 minutes

Black Bears in the Smokies
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
5:00 p.m.
There’s danger everywhere, high and low but always close especially if you’re an American ursus. Learn how we are the greatest danger to the American black bear.
Duration: 45 minutes
Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You'll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 30 minutes

Thursdays
Junior Ranger Guided Hike to Chasteen Creek Waterfall
Bradley Fork Trailhead, D-Loop Smokemont Campground
10:00 a.m.
Pack a snack and water and join a ranger on a moderate 3-mile round-trip hike along side Bradley Fork to Chasteen Creek Falls.
Duration: 3 hours
Difficulty: Moderate, 4 miles

Appalachian Life – Guided Walk
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 25 at 12:00 p.m.
Why did people settle this land? What made this area attractive to call home? Join a ranger for a walk at the Mountain Farm Museum to discover what life was like “in the old days.”
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Animal Defenses
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
2:00 p.m.
Skunks aren’t the only animals that defend themselves in the woods. Join a Ranger for a look at how animals big and small fend off those larger than themselves.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Mammal Mania!
South Porch of the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 25 at 4:00 p.m.
Otters and rabbits and bears, Oh my! Join a Ranger for a hands-on discovery of mammals in the park.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You’ll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 30 minutes

Fridays
Junior Ranger: Batteries Not Included
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 26 at 10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
What kind of toys did kids play with in the “old days?” Join a ranger to discover (or remember!) how kids were entertained before video games and iPods. You’ll be able to take home a “buzz button” of your very own. All ages welcome.
Duration: 30 minutes
Level: Easy

Junior Ranger Blacksmithing
Blacksmith Shop at the Mountain Farm Museum, adjacent to Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 26 at 10:00 a.m., 10:30 a.m., 11:00 a.m., 11:30 a.m.
Join a blacksmith to create your own take home item and experience the hard work of the past. Limited to ages 10 – 12.
Duration: 30 minutes

Junior Ranger: Leave No Trace
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
Starting June 26 at 12:30 p.m.
When you explore the wilderness, can anyone tell you’ve been there? How can you minimize the impact you leave behind? Join a ranger to find out!
Duration: 45 minutes

What is Land Worth?
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 26 at 2:30 p.m.
Join a ranger for a walk at the Mountain Farm Museum to explore the history of Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
Duration: 45 minutes

Junior Ranger: Feeding Time!
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
6:00 p.m.
Join park staff as they close up the Mountain Farm Museum for the evening. You’ll even be able to help feed the pigs and chickens!
Duration: 30 minutes

SATURDAYS
Longing for the “Good Ol’ Days”
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 27 at 10:30 a.m.
You’ve heard it before, but was it really the “good ol’ days?” Join a ranger on this walk at the Mountain Farm Museum to learn what life was like on an Appalachian mountain farm.
Duration: 45 minutes

Down on the Farm
Mountain Farm Museum adjacent to the Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 27 from 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
Walk down to the farm and see the kinds of activities 19th century families may have been engaged with, such as hearth cooking, woodworking, or gardening. Demonstration activities vary.
Duration: On-going for 2 hours

CATALOOCHEE VALLEY
Sundays
Junior Ranger: Smokey Mountain Elk
Palmer House, Cataloochee Valley
5:30 p.m.
It’s all about connection and balance in nature to insure survival for elk and other species living together in an ecosystem. Learn about the history of the elk through “show and tell” activities. Then stay and watch the elk come into in the fields!
Duration: 45 minutes

Eeek! Bats!
Oconaluftee Visitor Center Porch
Starting June 27 at 1:00 p.m.
Do they really suck blood? Do they really get caught in your hair? Are they friend or foe? Let the Ranger tell you the truth about these amazing creatures and the enemy among them.
Duration: 45 minutes
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Stream Splashing
Oconaluftee River adjacent to the Mountain Farm Museum
Starting June 27 at 3:00 p.m.
Roll up your pants and wade through a mountain stream to look for mayflies, stoneflies, dragonflies, and other aquatic critters. Be prepared to get wet. Closed toed shoes recommended.
Duration: 1.5 hours
Difficulty: Easy

Junior Ranger: Find Your Park
Tree Cookie area adjacent to Oconaluftee Visitor Center
Starting June 27 at 5:00 p.m.
Join a Ranger for a look into National Parks across the country and find out which one might be yours!
Duration: 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy

Smokemont Night Hike
Bradley Fork Trailhead, D-Loop Smokemont Campground
Starting June 27 at 8:45 p.m.
Move beyond the comfortable glow of the campfire and explore the Smokies nightlife. Limited to 25 participants. Call 828/497-1904 up to four days in advance to make reservations.
Duration: Approximately 1 hour
Difficulty: Easy, less than 1 mile
**General park information:**
(865) 436-1200  
www.nps.gov/grsm

**Backcountry information**
(865) 436-1297  
www.smokiespermits.nps.gov

**To order maps & guides**
(865) 436-7318 x226  
www.smokiesinformation.org

**Visitor information**
for more information, www.nps.gov/grsm

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**Emergencies**

Listed below are some numbers to call for emergencies that arise after hours.

- **Park Headquarters**
  (865) 436-9171
- **Cherokee Police**
  (828) 497-4131
- **Gatlinburg Police**
  (865) 436-5181

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**Hospitals**

- **Le Conte/Sevier County**
  (865) 446-7000, Middle Creek Rd, Sevierville, TN.
- **Blount Memorial**
  (865) 983-7211, U.S. 321, Maryville, TN.
- **Haywood County**
  (828) 456-7311, Waynesville, NC.
- **Swain County**
  (828) 488-2155, Bryson City, NC.

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**Regulations**

- Picking or digging plants is prohibited in the park.
- Persons feeding wildlife are subject to a $5,000 fine.
- Pets are not permitted on most park trails. Only the Gatlinburg and Oconaluftee River trails allow dogs on a leash.

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**Accessibility**

Restrooms at all park visitor centers (Cades Cove, Clingmans Dome, Oconaluftee, and Sugarlands) are fully accessible. The Sugarlands Valley all-access nature trail is located on Newfound Gap Road just south of Sugarlands Visitor Center.