



# *Visitors Guide*

FALL 2024

*Newton County*  
ARKANSAS



# Visitors Guide

**Newton County**  
ARKANSAS

This publication is a product of the Newton County Times  
© 2024 Carpenter Media Group

P.O. Box 453, Jasper, AR 72641  
870-446-2645

Editor: Jeff Brasel  
Content: Jeff Dezort and Jeff Brasel

Advertising Executives: Sheri Keeton & Brittany Vandegrift

Cover photo contributed by: Marysia Jastrzebski from Lost Valley Canoe & Lodging



*Well, aren't you a beauty?*

**A beautyberry, that is!**

**National Park Service**  
Buffalo National River

If you are walking along our trails this time of year, you may notice these berries hanging off a large-leafed plant. These are known as beautyberries, a name given to a group of plants spread across the Americas, Asia, Australia, and other areas. The local variety, the American beautyberry, is found throughout the southeastern United States. The plant is most noticeable in the late summer through much of the winter, when the shrub is covered in clusters of berries. As the leaves of the plant die away in the winter, the large clusters of berries that remain become easily noticeable. Their attractive purple coloration entices deer, birds, and other animals to eat them. Though the animals may chew up and digest the edible parts of the berry, the seeds will survive and use the animals to disperse themselves over a wide area.

People usually don't typically eat beautyberries. They tend to leave a dry, unpalatable taste in your mouth. Some people, however, turn them into jellies or wines that may taste better. While the berries may not make for the best snack, this plant does have other uses. A popular folk remedy had long considered the crushed leaves of beautyberry plant a natural mosquito repellent. Scientists at the United States Department of Agriculture demonstrated the presence of a chemical known as callicarpinal that drives away the blood-sucking pests. A later study even showed that it may help to repel ticks as well. That just goes to show that its beauty is more than just skin deep!



# Fall breeding season for copperhead snakes

**National Park Service**  
Buffalo National River

During your visit to Buffalo National River, you might encounter some of the local wildlife residents. It's always a treat to see a deer browsing along a trail you're hiking or a bald eagle soaring above the river during a float trip. However, there's one creature that most people prefer to keep their distance from – copperhead snakes! These snakes are known for their distinctive copper-colored heads and the Hershey kiss like pattern along the sides of their body. It is common knowledge they are venomous. You may come across one or even a couple of them while exploring the park. Copperheads may be found within the various habitats of the park: wooded areas, rocky hillsides, around downed trees, near the river, and in campgrounds.

The reason for the increased presence of copperheads right now is that it is their breeding season, which occurs from September to November in Arkansas.

Regardless of the time of year, encountering a copperhead can be worrisome. If you come across a copperhead, use common sense to minimize the risk of being bit. When walking on trails or in a campground, stay alert and pay attention to your surroundings. Wear appropriate hiking attire such as, long pants, closed-toe shoes, and knee socks. If you see a copperhead, or any snake for that matter, try not to disturb it. Keep a safe distance and do not approach, provoke, or touch it. If it starts to move, wait to see what direction it is going and go the opposite way or wait for it to leave the area.

To ensure safety and responsible coexistence with snakes, it is crucial to have knowledge about copperhead habitats and mating seasons. By being mindful of these factors, one can prepare for potential encounters and exercise caution. It is important to remember that snakes play a significant role in ecosystems and contribute to the balance of the food web. Therefore, it is our duty to coexist with them in a manner that prioritizes both our safety and their well-being. We hope you have a happy and safe fall hiking season!

Live music on our new outdoor **PON-TUNE** stage!

Join Us Wednesday Nights for Karaoke!

**99's Buffalo**

**BAR & GRILL**

Check out our Facebook page for **UPCOMING EVENTS!**

8800 HWY 7 S • HARRISON • 870-204-5100  
OPEN: Sunday - Thursday, 11am - 10pm  
Friday & Saturday, 11am - 11pm

**The Premier OUTFITTER**  
in the Upper Buffalo Area!

Canoes • Kayaks • Rafts • Bunkhouse • Gas  
• Shuttles • Country Store • Groceries  
• Cabins with Hot Tubs • Glamping Yurts

www.lostvalleycanoe.com  
Ponca, AR

**LOST VALLEY CANOE & LODGING**

37 Years Of Outfitting & Lodging!  
870-861-5522  
EMAIL: lostvalleycanoe@gmail.com

We are an authorized concessioner of the NPS

Come Stay... Come Relax...  
Come Explore

**Erbie Mountain Cabins**  
870-754-0086  
www.ErbieMountainCabins.com

**THE HOTTEST STYLES** for Men, Women & Children!

**Fall** looks for the family!

Twisted X, Justin, Ariat, Red Wing, Irish Setters, Danner, Laredo, Durango, Birkenstock, Chaco, Merrell & MANY many more!!!

**HARNESSES**  
**BOOTS & SHOES**

West Side of Square • Harrison • 870-741-5750



# Fuzzy Butt

*shaved by summer*



The Fuzzy Butt Waterfall is dependent on rainfall. During the dry summer months the waterfall can be a small flow. JEFF BRASEL/STAFF

By JEFF BRASEL  
sports@newtoncountytimes.com

**R**ICHLAND — The Ozarks are known for having some colorful names. Perhaps none is as unforgettable as Fuzzy Butt. Fuzzy Butt is a trail that leads to a waterfall and swimming hole at the end of the hike.

As an isolated area, Fuzzy Butt got its name from the swimmers that didn't wear clothing while enjoying the pool of water after the hike into the area.

During the spring or after heavy rains, the waterfall offers a strong current coming over the 16-foot drop into the pool.

On the recent visit, the water was coming out of a hole in the bluff. There were several areas where water was dropping from the ferns and the bluffs that surround the swimming hole.

The hike into the falls is a simple but long one. It is a horse trail, so hikers must pay attention to the path while observing the surroundings.

On the hike, visitors will start on the west side of the 1205 bridge. The entrance to the path is about 50 feet from the bridge and is hidden while walking up the county road 1205.

There are two ways to get to this bridge. The first way is to take 1205 from the Ben Hur area. This road is about a mile past Ben Hur when traveling east on Highway 16. There are no real street markers for 1205, but it has a tall, small squared white street sign on the left hand side of the road. On the right hand side of the road there is a sign promoting a horse camp.

Take this road 5.2 miles to find the bridge.

If using Highway 65, visitors should take the Snowball exit. After reaching Snowball on Highway 74, turn left to travel to Witts Spring. Joining Highway 16 in Witts Spring, visitors will travel about 2 miles to Richland Creek Road on the right hand side of the highway.

Take this dirt road about 4.0 miles until it intersects with 1205. Take a left and travel a half of a mile to the bridge. Parking for the hike is located on the east side of the bridge. There are two areas to place a car.

The beginning of the trail is smooth. A third of a mile into the adventure, there is a creek that travels over a set of rocks and makes a 10-foot waterfall. Turning left at this small creek can lead hikers to two more waterfalls.

Time can be taken here to view the Falling Water Creek. There is a path to the right that leads to the creek. There is a great area for kids to play in the creek or for visitors to sit and enjoy the sounds of the rushing water.

When getting back on the trail, there are some rocks that can be used to make it a dry pass over the brook.

There are two small ascensions in the trail. These climbs are about 20 foot each. One final push up another ascent completes the total climbs. In the hike there is a total of .07 of ascents.

Just before reaching Fuzzy Butt, there is a path that leads visitors to the creek one more time. The view here is from the west side of the famous Six Fingers Waterfalls. There are six areas that create waterfalls in this stretch of the creek.

At the one mile mark of the hike, alpinists will see that the trail becomes very overgrown. That is the point when they should turn left.

Fuzzy Butt is only steps away.

The trail is an easy hike. During the summer months, it would be best to be the second person on the trail. The first person will have opportunities to battle many spider webs.

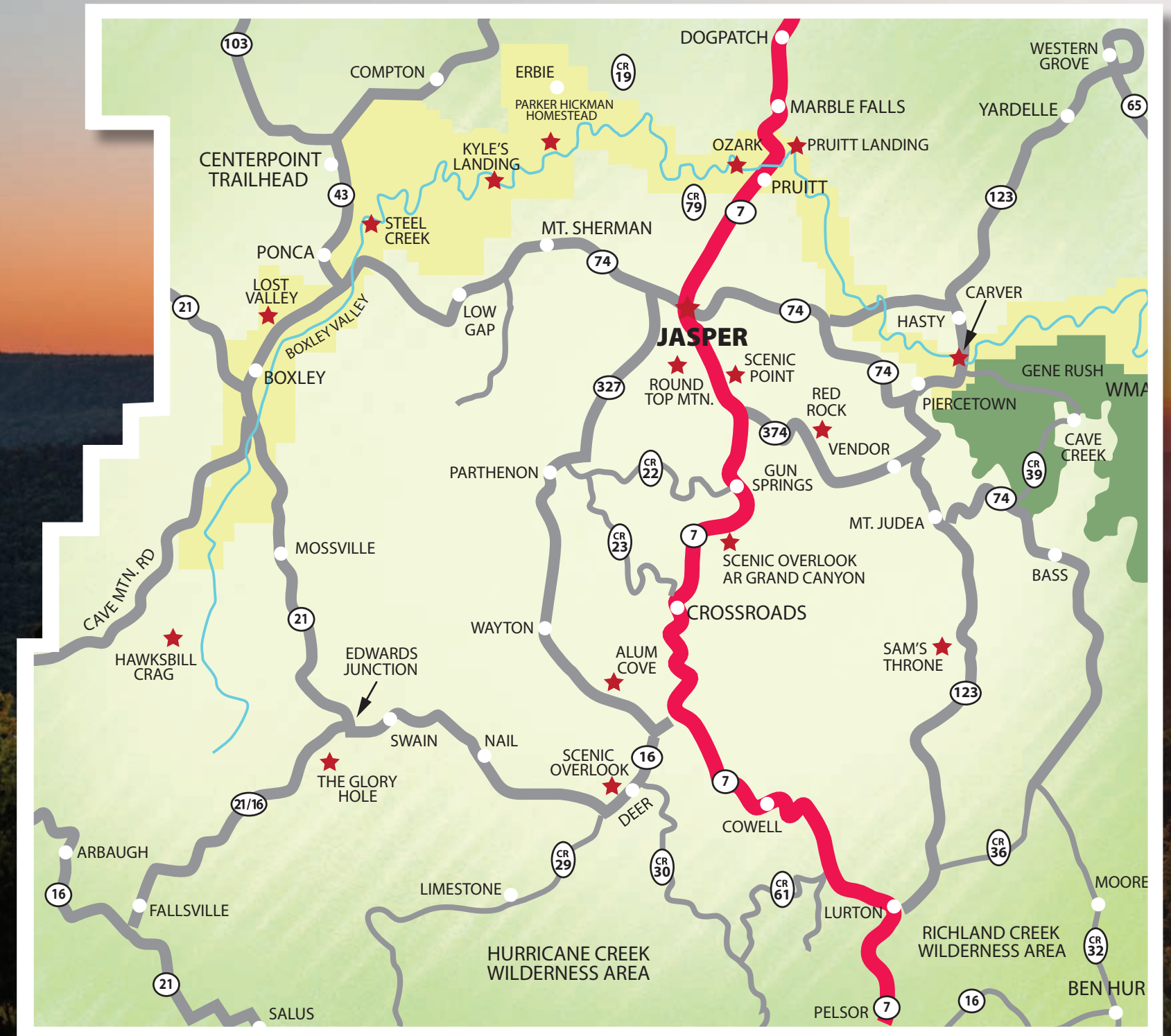
Walking in the forest, cragsmen will notice a big temperature drop. The path is completely covered with a canopy of mature Arkansas hardwoods. The only area of sun that will be spotted will be where the forest has been cut for the highlines.

The land under the highlines is the most grown up of the hike. Luckily, it is only a 50-foot clearing.

Fuzzy Butt is not as isolated as residents may think.

North of the parking area for the Six Fingers Waterfalls is another small parking area. This leads to a path that takes visitors to Falling Water Creek. After crossing the creek, which can be done without getting wet, there is a path that leads to Fuzzy Butt. It is only .1 of a mile to the waterfall.

Like so many waterfalls in the Richland Valley, Fuzzy Butt is dependent on rains to keep it flowing freely. However, the dry days of summer keep Fuzzy Butt to a small stream.



*Newton County*  
ARKANSAS





# Pam's Grotto leaves visitors in awe

By JEFF BRASEL  
sports@newtoncountytimes.com

**P**ELSOR — The drive to the Haw Creek Recreation area is one that can leave visitors in love with the natural beauty of Arkansas. There are many hikes in the area that can bring smiles to the face. One of those hikes is called Pam's Grotto. It is named after Tim Ernst's wife. Ernst is a photographer that is world known for his photograph and books about waterfalls in Arkansas.

This adventure is not for the faint of heart of maybe those with serious heart conditions.

To start the hike, alpinest will travel up a hill for nearly a third of a mile. The climb is a slow one that doesn't leave a visitor breathless.

Near the pinnacle of the hike, a decision will have to be made on which direction to travel. Turn left here.

After turning left, there is a large tree that has fallen across the path. Depending on the preference of the hiker, the tree can be crossed and become a memory.

Just after the tree, the path will pass a great rock format that will be

a good place to stop and rest or to get photos.

After resting, the path will reach the bluff line. It will move along this area for the remainder of the hike.

There will be several areas to explore along the rock formations. There is a cave and there are other outlets that can lead to hidden gems.

One of the most interesting spots along the trip is an area that looks like it has had holes drilled into the mountain. This interesting sight will occupy time during the hike.

Just past this part of the mountain, the sound that all hikers love to hear — the sound of falling water.

After getting to the point that the waterfall can be spotted, the path seems to disappear. There are many ways to get to the bottom of the trail to see Pam's Grotto.

The only problem with getting down to the bottom is that is a 50-foot drop on the climb down. A 50-foot drop means when leaving there is a 50-foot ascension to leave.

Once reaching the waterfall, there are plenty of areas that will allow one to sit and enjoy the beauty.

There are also several areas to take photos. The run-off of the waterfall

creates a creek that runs down the hill. There are several large rocks that serve as solid backgrounds for photos.

Another aspect of this waterfall adventure is the large area that allows visitors to be behind the waterfall.

Pam's Grotto is listed at 37-foot tall. It is a V-Slot waterfall.

After making the trip back down the mountain, there are still plenty of adventure that awaits visitors.

To get to Pam's Grotto, turn west off of Highway 7 that travels between Jasper and Russellville. Take Highway 123. About 11 miles from Highway 7, there will be an one-lane bridge over Sugar Creek. When reaching this area, visitors are getting close to the waterfall parking area.

The parking area is a very small spot on the south side of the highway. It is about 1.5 miles from the bridge. The parking area is very close to a primitive camping area that has a very steep drive.

If visitors see a large dirt parking area, then they have traveled too far.

After finding the correct parking area, simply cross the highway to the path that is there.



# Arkansas Bats

## Ozark Big-Eared Bat



**T**he Ozark big-eared bat is one of the rarest bats in North America, and they are only found in the Forests of the Ozarks. This special species lives here year-round and almost always roost in caves or rock crevices. Their amazing hearing allows them to hunt moths and beetles by ear.



**R**elax in rustic log rockers or benches on a shady wraparound deck overlooking Ponca Creek while observing some of the area's flora and fauna. A lazy trail along the creek offers a closer look, while nearby picnic tables, covered pavilion and large grassy area provide room for fun and games.

For an educational and fun souvenir, shop our gift corner for books, videos, shirts and more. Hunting and fishing licenses also are available. The center is within easy access to some exceptional camping, canoeing, swimming and fishing on the Buffalo National River, along with some of the finest hiking trails in the state. Cabin and canoe rentals are available in the area through private sources.

# PONCA NATURE CENTER



VISIT US AT  
4642 AR 43 Highway, Ponca, AR

HOURS:  
TUESDAY - SATURDAY 10AM - 4:30PM  
SUNDAY 10AM - 4:30PM

501-710-6347

Find us on Facebook or on the web at:  
[agfc.com/en/explore-outdoors/nature-centers/pnc/](http://agfc.com/en/explore-outdoors/nature-centers/pnc/)





# For the Birds

## January is Eagle Awareness Month



Eagles love Arkansas! They are fond of our natural waterways and mild winters. They both nest and overwinter here. Fish is their main prey.

### Great locations to see an eagle:

Lake DeGray, Bull Shoals, Petit Jean, Holla Bend and Pinnacle Mtn. State Park.

### FUN FACTS:

- Eagles can live up to 30 years in wild.
- Females are larger than males.
- They are strong swimmers.
- Eagles mate for life until one dies.
- They build large nests (5' wide x 3' tall) they may add to these year after year.
- The largest nest on record weighed 2 tons.

## What is your favorite winter bird sighting?

The Northern Cardinal (*Cardinalis cardinalis*) sports a brilliant cloak of scarlet feathers.

Winter is a great time to see these beautiful birds. Their striking red color is breathtaking. Especially when seen perched in evergreen trees flecked with snow.

Cardinals have a clear whistling song.

Beginning in late winter this song tells of a coming spring, while snow still blankets the ground and bitterly cold air swirls around snow covered twigs.

Once the breeding season starts, you may see a male cardinal attacking the side mirror of a vehicle. He is defending his breeding territory against the rival he sees in the mirror!

Cardinals are year-round residents at the Buffalo National River. Common in brushy habitats within or at the edges of woods, they feed by gathering seeds, fruit, berries, spiders, and insect larvae from the ground, low shrubs and trees. The female builds her nest in dense shrubs or among the branches of small trees

using twigs, bark strips, vines, leaves, rootlets, and paper lined with fine grass and hair. Males may help by bringing additional materials, and food to feed his mate.

For a checklist of birds found at Buffalo National River please see, <https://www.nps.gov/buff/learn/nature/birds.htm>



PHOTO CREDIT: NPS



Black vultures have all-black heads, while turkey vultures have red heads with virtually no feathers. AGFC PHOTO

## USDA black vulture study taking flight in Arkansas, Missouri

From the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission

**L**ITTLE ROCK — The Arkansas Game and Fish Commission and U.S. Department of Agriculture need the public's help collecting sightings of black vultures outfitted with special tags fitted to their wings. The birds are part of a multi-year study to better mediate conflicts with black vultures.

Birdwatchers, livestock owners and landowners are encouraged to report any tagged birds to the United States Geological Survey's Bird Banding Lab online at [reportband.gov](http://reportband.gov). Sightings can also be emailed to USDA Wildlife Biologist Eric Tillman at [Eric.A.Tillman@usda.gov](mailto:Eric.A.Tillman@usda.gov).

Black vultures and turkey vultures both play an important role in nature by eating dead animals and removing disease from the landscape. The more aggressive black vultures, however, can cause issues for cattle ranchers and other livestock producers. The species can prey on calves, vulnerable cows, and smaller farm animals such as lambs and goats. Black vultures also are known to cause property damage to vehicles, boats and houses.

"We have seen black vultures destroy the rubber seals around car windows and windshields as well as scratch up the paint when they have gathered around some of the boat ramps and parking areas to wildlife management areas in the state," Karen Rowe, nongame migratory bird coordinator for the AGFC, said. "They also will destroy roofing and caulking around vents and windows of homes if they establish themselves in one spot too long."

The USDA trapped 89 black vultures near the Missouri-Arkansas border and marked each with a white tag on their right wing. Each tag has a letter and number that is visible when the bird is perched and in flight. Twenty-eight of these vultures also were outfitted with radio transmitters to track daily movements.

By tracking the movement of these birds the USDA and its partners hope to better understand their movements and reactions to the various management tools used to deter them from nuisance situations.

"While there are a number of management tools we can recommend to people experiencing vulture conflict issues, we don't fully know how the use of these tools may affect their behavior and movements," said USDA Wildlife Biologist Eric Tillman. "Do they adjust their home range, alter their roosting network, or permanently abandon the conflict area? Or do they just return after management is completed? With this study, we hope to answer some of those questions."

Black vultures have a large, black body with a bare, black head. This species frequently flies higher than the red-headed turkey vulture. Turkey vultures have a much better sense of smell and use it to locate carrion that can be miles away. Black vultures, which are much more sight-oriented, will follow turkey vultures to their finds and drive them off of the spot.

Their aggressive nature also can cause many issues with livestock owners, as they may prey upon newborn calves, cows that are giving birth or smaller livestock. Livestock producers may use non-lethal techniques to deter black vultures, such as loud noises, spraying with a garden hose, or using pyrotechnics without a permit. Removing animal carcasses and cutting down dead tree snags and other possible roosting sites can also discourage black vultures.

Black vultures are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918 and may not be killed without a depredation permit obtained through Arkansas Farm Bureau.

Landowners can request assistance with black vulture damage to livestock or property by contacting USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service – Wildlife Services by calling 501-835-2318.

## Follow the colors on Scenic 7

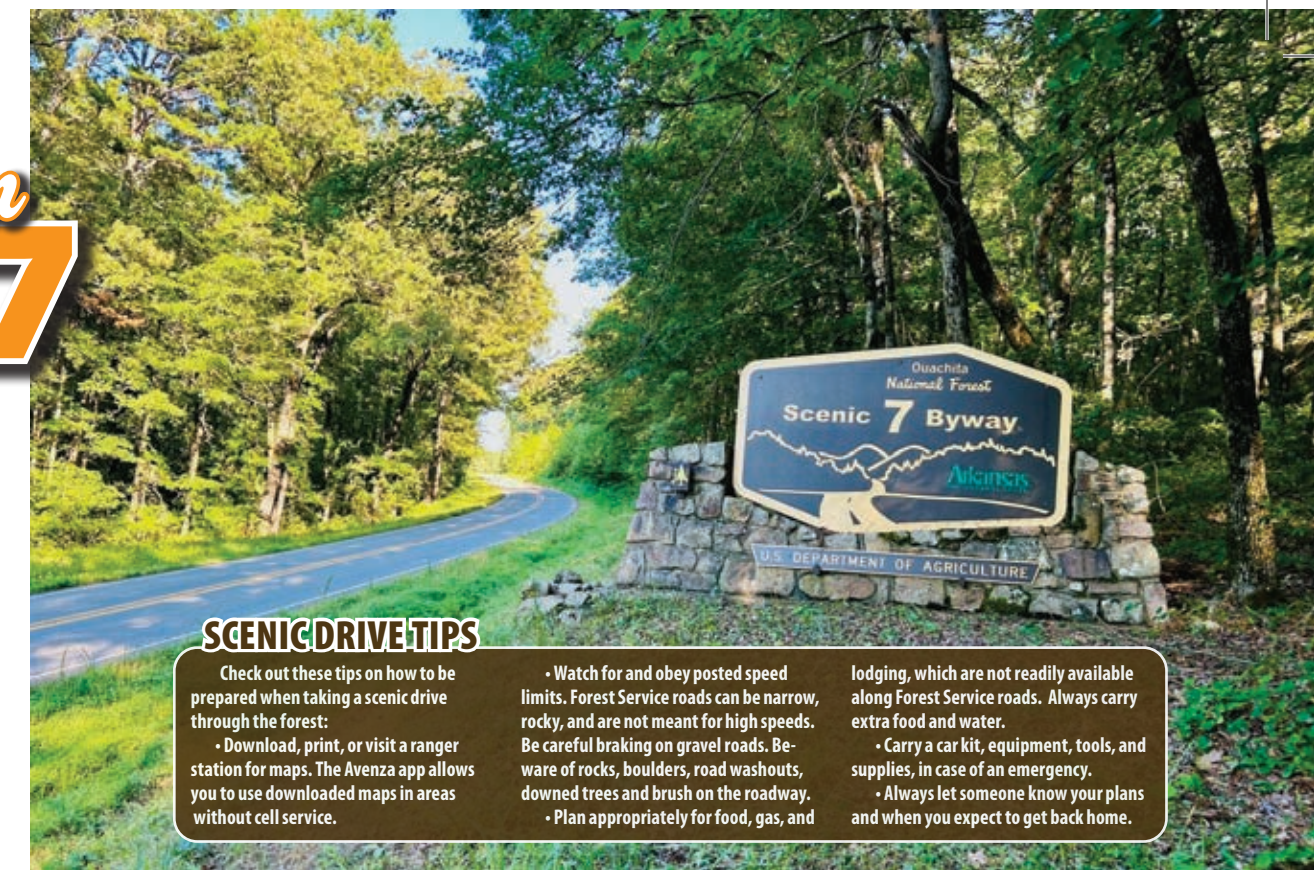
**T**he Ozark-St. Francis and Ouachita National Forests provide access to at least 10 national and state scenic byways throughout the most picturesque areas of Arkansas and Oklahoma. One designated route is the Arkansas Scenic 7 Byway that traverses both the Ozark and Ouachita Mountains. Take in mountaintop views, access a multitude of recreation opportunities, and experience all the national forests have to offer.

Highway 7 from Arkadelphia to Harrison became Arkansas' first scenic byway in 1993. The scenic byway was extended in 1999 to include the highway from the Louisiana state line to Arkadelphia. Scenic Highway 7 is approximately 290 miles in length.

Scenic 7 starts in the coastal plain region of southern Arkansas. This area consists of lowland rolling hills covered with dense pine forests and numerous river valleys covered with bottomland hardwood forests. The region is rich in wildlife, outdoor recreation, and historical resources.

South of Hot Springs travelers will enter the Ouachita Mountains which are noted for wide valleys, rich agricultural lands, timbered mountains and abundant wildlife. The Ouachita Mountains are unique in that they are the only mountain range in the U.S. whose ridges and valleys are oriented west to east.

Next is the Arkansas River valley between the Ouachita and Ozark Mountains. Since the earli-



### SCENIC DRIVE TIPS

Check out these tips on how to be prepared when taking a scenic drive through the forest:

- Download, print, or visit a ranger station for maps. The Avenza app allows you to use downloaded maps in areas without cell service.

- Watch for and obey posted speed limits. Forest Service roads can be narrow, rocky, and are not meant for high speeds. Be careful braking on gravel roads. Beware of rocks, boulders, road washouts, downed trees and brush on the roadway.
- Plan appropriately for food, gas, and

- lodging, which are not readily available along Forest Service roads. Always carry extra food and water.
- Carry a car kit, equipment, tools, and supplies, in case of an emergency.
- Always let someone know your plans and when you expect to get back home.

est days of European settlement in Arkansas, this valley has been an important transportation corridor and has been served by flatboats, keelboats, and steamboats, and the overland stage coach.

In the northwest portion of Arkansas, Scenic 7 traverses the Ozark Mountains. This region is famous for its colors, particularly in the fall when the oak-hickory forest turns to yellows, oranges, and

reds contrasted by bright green pines and the spring when the dogwoods, redbuds, wild plums, and wildflowers bloom. The Ozark Mountains are also noted for their clear mountain streams.

### SHADY OAKS

CAMPGROUND & RV PARK

## OPEN YEAR ROUND!

- Six beautiful cabins
- Very spacious 30/50 amp full service RV sites
- Electric/Primitive tent hammock sites
- Cable TV and Free Wifi
- Pavilion with kitchen, BBQ, game tables, basketball, playground, horseshoes
- Refreshing Splash Pad
- Propane fill station
- Tucked away from the hustle and bustle
- Paved roads to the campground
- The perfect gateway for fantastic motorcycle rides
- Nearby Activities Include: kayaking, cave exploring, waterfalls, hiking, rock climbing, mountain biking, ATVs & much more

For more information, visit us at [www.camptheoaks.com](http://www.camptheoaks.com)

960 Hwy 206 E • Harrison • 870-743-2343

## Ozark CAFE

Serving the Ozarks since 1969

Arkansas Food Hall of Fame

### 2023 Arkansas Food Hall of Fame Winner

107 E. Court Street, Jasper  
870-446-2976

HOURS: SUN, 7A-8P | FRI-SAT, 7A-9P



# #KnowBeforeYouGo

## Forest Camping

September is National Preparedness Month! Before heading out to the forest make sure to #KnowBeforeYouGo and follow these tips for camping.

• **Be Prepared.** Bring proper food storage. Bring emergency supplies just in case they are needed- map of the area, compass, extra batteries for flashlights, extra water and food, etc. Know the town that you'll be closest to in case you need to leave, or emergency services needs to come to you.

• **Check the Elements.** Make sure you check the weather for the area you'll be in, and keep an eye on the skies while you're in the forest. Weather can change quickly, so pack appropriate gear to keep you and your camp nice and dry. Also, reach out to the local ranger station for any alerts or closures due to weather.

• **Survey Your Surroundings.** When you arrive at your campsite check for potential hazards- poison ivy, insect nests, low hanging limbs, etc. Pitch your tent in a safe spot - avoid being too close to water and find level terrain. Build fires in a safe area.

• **Leave No Trace.** Pack out what you pack in, dispose of your trash properly, ensure your fire is completely out before leaving, and keep it clean.

Whether you're roughing it in a tent or planning a family picnic, there are many ways to make sure that your experience is fun and safe. Consider the following basic tips:

### BE PREPARED

Pack a first aid kit. Your kit can prove invaluable if you or a member of your group suffers a cut, bee sting or allergic reaction. Pack antiseptics for cuts and scrapes, tweezers, insect repellent, a snake bite kit, pain relievers, and sunscreen. Tailor your kit to your family's special needs.

Learn ABC - Airway, Breathing, & Circulation. Know how to perform CPR and basic first aid. Recognizing serious injuries will enable you to attend to a victim until medical help arrives.

Bring emergency supplies. In addition to a first aid kit, you should also have a map of the area, compass, flashlight, knife, waterproof fire starter, personal shelter, whistle, warm clothing, high energy food, water, water-purifying tablets, and insect repellent.

Responsible Recreation. Being prepared includes knowing how to be a responsible camper. Learn more on our Responsible Recreation page.

### CHECK THE ELEMENTS

What is in the skies? Check the weather report before you leave home. When you arrive at the site, keep on eye on the skies for changes and, if possible, carry a compact weather radio. In inclement weather, take shelter until the bad weather passes. Stay dry - wet clothes contribute to heat loss. Also, keep sleeping bags and important gear dry at all times.

Are there forest or grassland alerts? Forest and grassland home pages post alerts you should know before you go. Many of our forests and grasslands also post alerts on Twitter. The latest fire information may be found on InciWeb.

### SURVEY YOUR SURROUNDINGS

Arrive early. Plan your trip so that you arrive at your actual campsite with enough daylight to check over the entire site and safely set up camp.

Check for potential hazards. Be sure to check the site thoroughly for glass, sharp objects, branches, large ant beds, poison ivy, bees, and hazardous terrain.

Avoid areas of natural hazards. Check the contour of the land and look for potential trouble spots due to rain or snow. Areas that could flood or become extremely muddy can pose a problem.

Inspect the site. Look for a level site with enough room to spread out all your gear. A site that has trees or shrubs on the side of prevailing winds will help block strong, unexpected gusts.

Pitch your tent in a safe spot. Make sure your tent is made of flame-retardant fabric, and keep it a safe distance away from campfires. Keep insects out of your tent by closing the entrance quickly when entering or leaving.

Build fires in a safe area. Your open fires and fuel-burning appliances must be far enough away from the tent to



prevent ignition from sparks, flames, and heat. Never use a flame or any other heating device inside a tent. Check to know whether there are fire restrictions in place before starting a campfire. You could be fined if you start a fire in a restricted area.

### OUTDOOR AWARENESS

Ensure your fires are always attended. Be sure you have an area for a campfire that cannot spread laterally or vertically - a grill or stone surface is ideal. When putting the fire out, drown it with water. Make sure all embers, coals and sticks are wet. Embers buried deep within the pile have a tendency to reignite later.

Use caution with propane stoves, grills. Read the instructions that come with the stove and propane cylinder. Use the stove as a cooking appliance only - never leave it unattended while it's burning.

Watch out for bugs. Hornets, bees, wasps, and yellow jackets are a problem at many campsites. Avoid attracting stinging insects by wearing light-colored clothing and avoiding perfumes or colognes. Should such an insect approach, do not wave wildly and swat blindly - instead use a gentle pushing or brushing motion to deter them.



Dispose of trash properly. Remember to recycle - use the proper recycling bins if available.

Beware when encountering wildlife. To ward off bears, keep your campsite clean, and do not leave food, garbage, coolers, cooking equipment or utensils out in the open. Remember that bears can be dangerous and unpredictable - never feed or approach a bear. Use a flashlight at night - many animals feed at night and the use of a flashlight may warn them that you are approaching.

Know which plants are poisonous. Familiarize yourself with any dangerous plants that are common to the area. If you come into contact with a poisonous plant, immediately rinse the affected area with water and apply a soothing lotion such as calamine to the affected area.

Keep it clean. Wash your hands, particularly after using the toilet and before handling food to prevent the spread of germs and disease. Use biodegradable soap. Keep your campsite clean, too. And don't forget to remove all trash.

## Forest Hiking



Let's talk about being a prepared hiker. Much like when preparing to go camping, it's important to research and gather some things beforehand:

• **Be prepared.** Wear proper clothing and shoes, and consider bringing the items listed in the picture. Download, print, or visit a ranger station for trail maps.

• **Check the elements.** Make sure to check the forecast for the area you'll be hiking in, and it never hurts to bring a rain jacket just in case.

• **Be aware of your surroundings.** Watch for other trail users, especially if you're on a multi-use trail. Listen and watch for changes in the weather.

• **Leave No Trace.** Carry out any trash you have, and remember to "take only pictures and leave only footprints".

### Hiking

Hiking is a wonderful way to see and experience the many wonders of our nation's forests. Visit your forest's ranger district office, our All Maps page, or National Forest Store to obtain a trail map to help you plan your route based on your ability, available time and interest. Please follow these safety tips to ensure a safe journey:

Responsible Recreation. Being prepared includes knowing how to be a responsible hiker. Learn more on our Responsible Recreation page.

Stay on marked trails.

Don't hike alone. Let the slowest person in your party set the pace. This is especially important when children are a part of your group.

Leave your itinerary with a friend or family member and check in with them upon your return.

Develop an emergency plan before you start your trip. Make sure everyone knows what to do if they become lost or a medical emergency arises. Give children whistles with the instructions to "stop and blow" if they become lost.

Take frequent rests or vary your pace to maintain your energy level.

Drink plenty of water, even on cool, wet days. Never drink your entire supply between refills.

Wear appropriate clothing, including sturdy boots that are broken in and are comfortable.

Consider using a hiking pole or walking stick to help maintain your balance in unlevel or hazardous areas.

Be aware of your surroundings, and pre-plan your approach before hiking through more hazardous areas. Wet surfaces can be a hazard and even more so if it's on a slope.

Consider what you'll do if you start to slide or fall so that you are prepared.

If falling, do not try to catch yourself; try to avoid landing on your hands, elbows or knees. Landing on the side of your body is much safer.

If the slope is such where you know you are going to slide, lowering your center of gravity, by sitting down and sliding on your feet or bottom, is safer.

If sliding while standing up, keep your weight over your feet and bend your knees—do not lean back or forward while sliding.

If on a day hike, extra weight wears you down and reduces your agility over uneven terrain. Pack as light as possible. Leave the extras behind, but consider bringing these essentials:

- Map
- Sunglasses and a hat
- Sunscreen
- Flashlight
- Waterproof matches
- First aid kit
- Water and water-purifying tablets
- High-energy bars, granola, candy, or fruit

• **Extra clothing.** Temperatures can change dramatically, particularly if there is an elevation change. For every 1,000 feet of elevation gain, the temperature often drops three to five degrees.



# Fall Leaves

Where do all the leaves go once they've fallen?

This time of year, most leaves have fallen off of the trees and formed a blanket on the ground. When some people see this in the yard, they'll rake up the leaves and burn them or dispose of them in some other way. Here at Buffalo National River, however, the leaves will largely be left alone. Ultimately, the leaves will take care of themselves and even help to contribute to improving the natural environment.

This blanket of dead leaves forms its own important part of a forest's ecology. The leaves make for an excellent habitat for insects, spiders, snails, and many other small animals as they try to survive the cold winter months. They can shelter below the cover of the leaves, find water, and eat other creatures residing in the leaf litter or even the leaves themselves. Below the top layer, small invertebrates, like beetles and worms, break leaves into smaller pieces that bacteria and fungi slowly decompose into a dark organic matter known as humus. Humus forms a vital part of the soil and provides many nutrients that plants use to grow.

Eventually, the leaves will rot away and make way for grasses and other plants to grow again in the spring. They form an important part of the natural cycle that replenishes the soil and keeps the forests strong. So, next time you see the blankets of leaves scattered under the trees, remember that although they make look dead, they help to sustain life through the winter and into the next spring.



## Autumn fruit. What do you call it?

"It is best not to sit, camp, or park under a Bodark tree." - Anonymous

What do you call these freaky fruits?

Falling from the Osage Orange tree (*Maclura pomifera*), these fruits are considered inedible. However, you may notice them torn or burrowed into on trails at Buffalo National River. The small seeds inside are favorites of squirrels and deer.

The tree itself has historic ties to the Ozark region. Dubbed by early French explorers "Bois d'arc" as a reference to the bows made by the Osage tribe. Be sure to look for these next time you visit Buffalo National River!

Want to learn more about the vegetation of Buffalo National River? Visit <https://www.nps.gov/buff/learn/nature/treesandshrubs.htm> <https://www.srs.fs.usda.gov/volu/maclura/pomifera.htm>



## STAY AFLOAT: ALWAYS WEAR A LIFE JACKET!

A Coast Guard approved WEARABLE life jacket is required for each person on board any vessel. Throw cushions do not meet this requirement. Children 12 and under must wear a securely fastened life jacket while on board any vessel.

DYK Buffalo National River has a FREE Loaner Life jacket program. Visit <https://www.nps.gov/.../life-jacket-loaner-program.htm>

## 6 CFR §3.7 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

Occupants of a vessel who are twelve (12) years of age or younger must wear personal flotation devices, of the types described below in brackets, securely fastened to their persons at all times while aboard any vessel. [One (1) Type I, II, III, or V, if used according to its approved conditions, personal flotation device (PFD) which is U.S. Coast Guard approved, in good and serviceable condition, and of proper size for each person on board]. A "vessel" is defined as every description of watercraft, or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on the water (36 CFR § 1.4). See also Arkansas Code 27-101-703 (d)(4) and 36 CFR 1.5.

## 36 CFR §3.7 PERSONAL FLOTATION DEVICES

Occupants of a vessel who are twelve (12) years of age or younger must wear personal flotation devices, of the types described below in brackets, securely fastened to their persons at all times while aboard any vessel. [One (1) Type I, II, III, or V, if used according to its approved conditions, personal flotation device (PFD) which is U.S. Coast Guard approved, in good and serviceable condition, and of proper size for each person on board]. A "vessel" is defined as every description of watercraft, or other artificial contrivance used, or capable of being used, as a means of transportation on the water (36 CFR § 1.4). See also Arkansas Code 27-101-703 (d)(4) and 36 CFR 1.5.

Determination: There are numerous rapids and natural obstacles on the Buffalo River within the Park, as well as unforeseen circumstances, which may cause a person on a vessel to end up in the river. The use of a properly fitted, US Coast Guard-approved whitewater PFD reduces the possibility of drowning. The requirement is optional for boaters ages 13 years of age or older in accordance with Arkansas State boating regulations. While optional, the Park always encourages all boaters to wear their PFD.

# What a drag, man

Kayaking and canoeing are great activities at Buffalo National River. As summer continues, the water levels have become a little low in places. Always check the river levels at the link below to make sure you have enough water in the section you plan on paddling to maximize your fun. Don't forget you will need a life jacket/PFD, floating beverage holder, and a mesh bag for trash if you are putting a vessel on.

Photo Information: This photo was taken in the Upper District at Ponca last July.

For more information on current river levels please call the Tyler Bend Visitor Center at 870-439-2502.



## Jasper Pharmacy

DRUG STORE & GIFTS

"Your Hometown Pharmacy"

200 West Church Street • Jasper

870-446-5515

HOURS: Monday-Friday, 8:30am - 5:30pm  
Saturday, 8:30am - 12:00pm

## TANNER LUMBER & HOME CENTER

Come in and see our courteous and knowledgeable staff.

**WE ARE HERE TO SERVE YOU!**

GET YOUR SUPPLIES FOR:

- Lawn Equipment & Tools • Camping • Plumbing
- Painting • Hunting • & MUCH MORE!



HOURS:  
Mon-Sat  
7am-530pm

HIGHWAY 7 NORTH • JASPER AR

Lumber: 870-446-2865 Hardware: 870-446-5164

**WOW LIQUOR**

Mon-Thur 9:00am-9:00pm  
Fri-Sat 9:00am-10:00pm  
CLOSED SUNDAYS

Located Just North of the Newton County Line!  
NICE SELECTION OF:  
Wines, Liquor  
Domestic, Imported & Craft Beers

8756 AR-7 | Harrison, AR | 870-204-6614

**Bob's AUTO BODY**

870-446-2110

**JASPER**





# Winter Camping

The beginning of the winter camping season at Buffalo National River means there will be limited amenities available to campers throughout the park. While camping is free, you are still required to register at the stations. Trails are still opened for hiking and access to the river for those who wish to hike or float, but please be aware that road maintenance may be limited during inclement weather conditions.

Upper District: There are several developed campgrounds in the Upper District, including Steel Creek, Kyles Landing, Erbie, Ozark, and Carver that are available for winter camping. Please note that water is only available at Steel Creek and Carver, and flush toilets are only available at the Steel Creek Launch. Vault toilets will remain open at all campgrounds. Please practice good stewardship and be prepared to pack out all trash.

Middle District: The group sites and walk-in campsites at Tyler Bend Campground will be closed. However, the campsites in the main loop will be open. There will be flush toilets and showers available, but the



dump station will be closed.

Lower District: At Buffalo Point Campground only Loop B will remain open for primitive camping. There will be one hydrant available for water and a port-a-john facility. There are no flush restrooms or electricity available at this time. The dump station will be closed. Primitive camping will also be available at Rush and Spring Creek Campgrounds.

The Tyler Bend Visitor Center and Buffalo Point Ranger Station will be open from Thursday through Mon-

day, from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Winter camping offers a wonderful opportunity to experience nature. However, it demands thorough preparation and planning. Regardless of your chosen camping location, prioritizing safety is crucial. Also, keep in mind that Buffalo National River lacks internet connectivity so you should inform someone about your camping destination and expected return date. Enjoy your adventure, unwind, stay safe, and create unforgettable memories!

**Winter Driving**

While it's not cold enough for winter weather yet, it's never too early to be prepared. Being prepared is the key to a more enjoyable journey to the forests; winter safety starts before you get there. Check out these safety tips:



National Park Service  
Buffalo National River

Most spiders don't make for the best parents. They'll lay their eggs, wrap them up in a silken sac, store it in a web or secluded place, and leave their young to their fate. Many animals can easily prey upon these eggs, making it necessary for spiders to have so many children to ensure that at least some survive to maturity. Some species of spiders will at least guard their eggs against these predators until they hatch, but they then leave them to fend for themselves shortly after that. Life can be dangerous for a freshly hatched spider trying to survive in a world full of much bigger predators and no parental support.



Wolf spiders, on the other hand, go the extra mile to protect their young. They are one of only a few kinds of spiders that carry their egg sacs with them. They hang it on their back ends and carry these large orbs behind them as they wander around. In fact, this behavior usually makes it possible to tell them apart from the similar-looking family of spiders known as nursery web spiders. These spiders carry their egg sacs in front of them with their jaws rather than the back of their abdomen like wolf spiders. Here, they are further protected from predators and other dangers. While they generally won't need food at this early stage in their lives, the mother may be seen extending her legs down into water sources so that her young can climb down to drink.

Be sure to keep an eye out for these remarkable spiders as they carry their children with them. Spiders form an important part of the ecosystem by keeping bug populations in check, so make sure you treat them with respect and let them pass by without harm.

**Saturday Special: Prime Rib**  
"Friendliest Spot in Town"

**Owner: Marie Bottini**  
www.lowgapcafe.com

870-861-5010

603 East Court Street • Jasper, AR

Wednesday - Thursday 11am-8pm  
Friday - Saturday 11am-9pm

## THE AREA AGENCY ON AGING OF NORTHWEST ARKANSAS CARES FOR SENIORS



Serving our local community for over 44 years.

To find a location near you or to get more information, please visit [www.aaanwar.org](http://www.aaanwar.org) or call 1-800-432-9721, 870-741-1144 or locally at 870-446-2337.

Now accepting new clients and personal care assistants in Baxter, Benton, Boone, Carroll, Madison, Marion, Newton, Searcy & Washington counties.

The AAANWA is committed to the non-discriminatory delivery of services and is an equal opportunity provider and employer.







# Watch out for Deer

National Park Service  
Buffalo National River

Deer, oh dear. Look out for the deer! Deer are a frequent sight along Buffalo National River, particularly along the side of our roads. They frequently browse for food along the open, grassy shoulders right next to where we drive. This makes them a common wildlife sighting for many of our visitors and they only become more visible during this time of year. They are more active during mating season, which runs from around October to December. They are also crepuscular, meaning that they are most active during dawn and dusk. With days growing shorter and daylight savings time ending on November 5th, more people will be driving during this time.

While they can be fun to watch, they can also pose a significant danger to drivers. Deer have a tendency to panic as cars pass and may attempt to cross the road with little warning, leading to a collision. This can result in significant amounts of property damage, injuries, and even fatalities. Always make sure to watch the road. A deer could dash out in front of you if you are glancing down at your phone or distracted in some other way. If you see one deer cross in front of you, that doesn't mean you're in the clear. Others may be waiting at the edge of the woods to cross behind them.

If collision is inevitable, make sure that you slow down as much as possible to lessen the impact. Lower speeds and your seatbelt may save you from the worst injuries. Swerving away from a deer may only put you in a worse position where you run off the road or even collide with another vehicle or object.

Remember that wildlife, including deer, is unpredictable. We must remain cautious to ensure both their safety and ours. Take care, stay safe, and enjoy your time here at Buffalo National River!

## Pets in the forest



What's your favorite place in the Forest to take your best friend? #KnowBeforeYouGo and check out where you can safely take your dog by contacting your local forest office.



USDA Photo by P. Keres



### Firewood permits offered in Ozark-St Francis National Forests

Did you know the Forest Service offers firewood cutting permits? Stay warm this winter by stocking your wood piles from easily accessible established cutting areas within the National Forest!

Stop by your closest district office for a map of areas established for 2024! Visit <https://www.fs.usda.gov/detail/osfnf/about-forest/offices> for locations and hours. Call ahead...winter weather sometimes impacts our hours. (No permits are issued at the main Russellville location.)

### HUNTING SAFETY

All state game regulations are in effect on National Forest lands. Prohibited activities include:

- Baiting game species on the national forests.
- Shooting from or across a county, state, or federally maintained road.
- Possessing or consuming alcohol during any hunting activity or while operating a motorized vehicle, including off-highway vehicles.
- Traveling off designated routes for motorized vehicle use.
- Leaving dispersed campsites up and unoccupied for longer than 30 days.
- Driving off-highway vehicles off designated routes.

And remember to remove hunting stands from the forest at the end of the hunting season.

# Forest Hunting

Whether you're a hunter or not, it's important to know when the seasons are and what you can do to stay safe while recreating on the forest. Wear "hunter orange" and stick to designated trails and roads when you're in the woods. Check out the graphic below for more tips. #BeSafeBeSeen

For those that do hunt on national forests, follow the state laws and regulations, including seasons, dates and licensing. Some areas may be off limits to hunting, so check in with your local ranger station to be sure you are following all the rules.

An array of wildlife suitable for hunting may be found on national forests and grasslands. Hunting is a seasonal activity, and the rules are simple: Follow the state laws and regulations pertaining to hunting, including seasons, dates and licensing. Forests and grasslands may place some areas as off limits to hunting. So check in with your local Forest Service ranger to be sure you are following all the rules.

#### When on Forest Service land remember that:

All firearms and bows with arrows should be cased and unloaded while in a recreation area or other public areas.

Discharging a firearm (including a bow and arrow) is prohibited in or within 150 yards of a developed recreation site, a residence, or any place where people are likely to be.

Shooting across bodies of water or a Forest Service road is prohibited.

Shooting into or within any cave, mine or open shaft is prohibited.

Private land is interspersed with public land and you must obtain written permission from the private landowner to hunt on their property. Obtain a map and use caution to ensure you don't inadvertently stray off public land onto private.

Only portable stands or blinds are allowed. Check with your local ranger district for restrictions and time limits.

#### Stay safe when hunting by following these tips:

Check weather reports before embarking on a hunting trip.

Tell someone where you will be hunting and when you will return.

Be familiar with the area you want to hunt. Bring a map and compass.

Carry a basic survival kit and be prepared for an unexpected overnight stay in the field. The survival kit should contain a rope, a knife, water, waterproof matches, an emergency shelter, and first aid supplies.

Dress properly and be prepared for the worst possible conditions.

Wear hunter orange as your outermost gear so that you are visible to other hunters. Do not wear white or tan during deer season.

Always treat your weapon as if it is loaded, even if it isn't, and know where your hunter partners are located at all times.

If accompanied by a dog, the dog should also wear hunter orange or a very visible color on a vest, leash, coat or bandana. Check the state regulations to determine if a dog is allowed on a hunt.

Check hunting equipment before and after each outing, and maintain it properly. Familiarize yourself with its operation before using it in the field.

Carry a spare set of dry clothing. Utilize layering techniques to pull away moisture while retaining body warmth. Always bring rain gear.

Clearly identify your target before shooting. Prevent unfortunate accidents or fatalities.

Be alert when hunting near developed areas and trails. Other recreationists are enjoying the forest as well.

Your cell phone may save your life, but don't count on it. Many areas of most forests are not within signal range.





## Erbie Campground *road full of interest*

By **JEFF BRASEL**  
jeffb@harrisondaily.com

**J**ASPER — After crossing the Buffalo River at Pruitt and looking at the new bridge, travelers will happen upon a sign pointing to the Erbie Campground.

A turn off to follow this dirt road will lead visitors to a day of natural activities that will be both educational and fun.

There are many points of interest that will amaze children and adults alike. All of these things can be done without setting a foot into the Buffalo River.

The first thing that comes into view on the gravel road is the Koen Interpretive Trail. Named for Henry Koen, the short hike is wheelchair accessible.

It offers a view of the Ozark timbers. There are more than 30 variety of plant species that are marked on this trail. There are picnic facilities as well.

Two miles down the road, there is another spot for adventure — Cedar Grove. There is a .3 hike on the west side of the road that takes wanderers to a big pond. There is a seating area next to the water that allows visitors to listen to the sounds of nature.

On the east side of the road is the path that leads alpinists to the Ozark Campground.

This hike has many natural sights to see. One of the favorites is a small opening to a cave. This opening acts as an air conditioner on a hot summer day. This is an 1.7 mile hike one way.

After leaving Cedar Grove, it is only 1.5 miles up the road to the next stop. Liles Waterfall is at the 3.5 mile mark of the trip from Highway 7.

There will be a parking area on a curve on the right side of the road. This will be after cars travel over a culvert. To find the waterfall, walk back over the culvert. It is located just a few steps from this point.

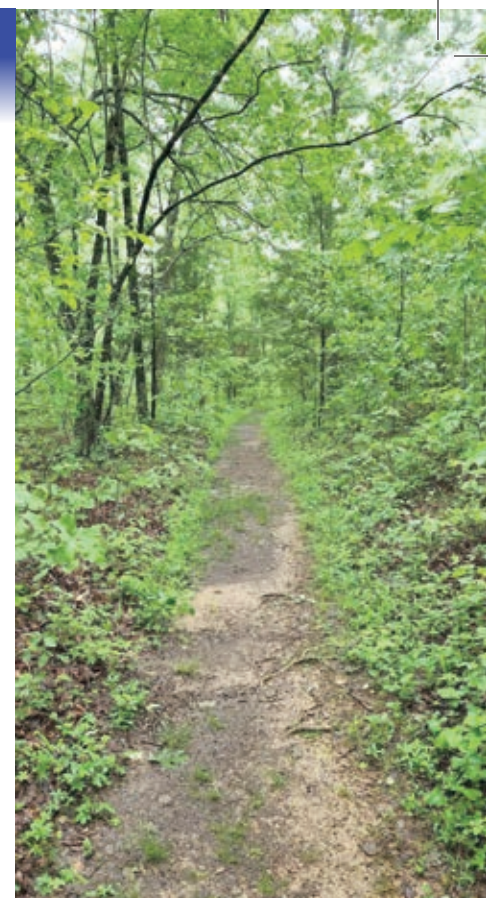
The hike to Liles Falls, which was named after a National Park employee, Jim Lile, who was instrumental in building the trails in the National Park, is only a tenth of a mile from the road. This path also intersects with the Buffalo River Trail. Do not follow the BRT. Stay on the more primitive path.

This path has been worn by visitors. It is an easy walk to the top of the falls. The hike is pretty level. Getting to the bottom of the falls is a different story.

It is only .05 to get to the bottom to see the falls, however, during the short walk this is an 85-foot drop in elevation. Even with dry soil, it is very tricky. After an afternoon Ozark rain, it is even harder.

After seeing the staggered 40-foot waterfall, it is back to the top to continue the Erbie adventure.

Reaching the Erbie Campground, visitors can get a good view of the river or travel around the



campground and read the educational kiosks that are located throughout the park.

There are vaulted restrooms at the campground.

From the west end of the campground, there is a short half mile walk that will lead to the Parker-Hickman Homestead. This is located in the old community of Erbie.

There is a road that continues past the homestead, that was closed at the time of this writing due to high water.

This road leads to a low-water crossing of the Buffalo River and if followed will connect with Highway 206 in Gaither.

Erbie Campground Road leads to an adventure that can take a morning or an afternoon to visit.

**JAPC**  
JASPER ADVERTISING & PROMOTION COMMISSION

# JASPER JEEP JAM

## AND OVERLANDING RALLY

*Not Just For Jeeps!!!*

**JASPER, ARKANSAS**  
**March 13-16, 2025**

[www.jasperjeepjam.com](http://www.jasperjeepjam.com)

**JAPC**  
JASPER ADVERTISING & PROMOTION COMMISSION

**Arkansas Color Tour**

**Dogwood Town**  
JASPER, ARK

**Come Tour With Us**

**Spring Waterfall Chasing Tour**

**Murder Mystery Tour**

**DETECTIVE**  
CRIME SCENE DO NOT TOUCH

[www.jasperarevents.com](http://www.jasperarevents.com)



# See it all with the Newton County Back Roads Atlas Map



Get yours at select Newton County businesses  
or at [newtoncountychamber.com](http://newtoncountychamber.com)



For more information  
please visit  
[newtoncountychamber.com](http://newtoncountychamber.com)

