



HIKE INTO HISTORY

DISCOVERY SERIES HIKES

The “Discovery Series” features eight easy-to-moderate, family-friendly, self-guided hikes throughout the park.

Moonshining in the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Grundy Forest (Fiery Gizzard north end), Tracy City

Moonshining in the South Cumberlands takes you along the Grundy Day Loop to School House Falls, once the site of a moonshine still. Stills were common in the South Cumberlands in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, because this area was prized for its clear and pure water. Along the way you'll also see the site of the Civilian Conservation Corps camp that was home to the hundreds of young men who built much of the famed Fiery Gizzard Trail during the 1930s, as well as the foundation of the CCC's pump house at the base of Blue Hole Falls.

Mining in the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Lone Rock Trail, (Grundy Lakes area) off US 41 S. of Tracy City

From the 1870s until the 1920s, coal mining was an important part of the economy of this region. *Mining in the South Cumberlands* takes you to the Grundy Lakes area of the park, where you can see remains of the beehive-shaped “coke ovens” where the coal was heated to produce coal coke, which was later used in blast furnaces to make iron. On the Lone Rock Loop Trail, you'll also see depressions in the hillsides, the remains of many small, narrow mine shafts, called “dog hole mines.”

Following in the Footsteps of Governor Dunn

Trailhead: Savage Day Loop (Savage Ranger Station, off TN 399), Palmer

To celebrate the more recent history of the area, *Following in the Footsteps of Governor Dunn* commemorates the 45th anniversary of the visit by Tennessee's then-governor to the South Cumberlands, after which he became a strong advocate for the state's purchase of Savage Gulf. Dunn was invited by then-state-naturalist Mack Prichard to “come and stretch your legs” in Savage Gulf. Dunn took him up on the idea, and, along with a party of other state officials, toured the Gulf by jeep, horseback, and on foot. Your hike will take you on a portion of Dunn's journey, out to Rattlesnake Point, where you can take in the same “forever wild” views that so impressed the governor 45 years ago.

Natural History of the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Collins West (off 51st Avenue), Gruetli-Laager

Natural History of the South Cumberlands takes you to some of the most spectacular places in the park.

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You'll traverse the breathtaking rock amphitheater at Suter Falls; cross Fall Creek and make your way down, out of the sandstone "cap" that protects the Cumberland Plateau, through the shale layer and finally into the limestone layers below. There, you'll come to Horsepound Falls and one of the many caves the water has carved out of the softer limestone.

Native Americans in the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Buggytop (Carter State Natural Area, Highway 56), Sherwood

Native Americans in the South Cumberlands takes you to the mouth of Buggytop Cave, one of the largest natural cave openings in Tennessee. Buggytop Cave is actually part of an extensive cave network in this area, and on this trek you'll also visit a second cave entrance, Peter Cave, which is known to have been frequented by Native American hunter-gatherers for many centuries. *Please remember that the interior of the cave is off-limits due to the potential for introducing White-Nosed Bat Syndrome into the cave's bat population.*

Railroads in the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Savage Day Loop (Savage Ranger Station, off TN 399), Palmer

The discovery of coal gave rise to the appearance of railroads in this area, built primarily to bring the coal to market. *Railroads in the South Cumberlands* will take you to one of these special-purpose railroads, the "dinky line", on the north rim of Savage Creek, which brought the coal (and later, timber) out of Savage Gulf. As you walk along the Dinky Line, you can still see some of the old cross-ties alongside the trail, which follows the original rail grade for about a mile.

Pioneers in the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Stone Door Ranger Station (off TN-56), Beersheba Springs

Pioneers of the South Cumberlands gives you a glimpse of what life was like for the earliest European settlers in this area. Several historic cabins have been preserved in the park, the most notable of which is the Decatur Savage cabin, named for the man whose family gave its name to Savage Gulf. Savage and his wife, Fannie Tate, farmed and lived in the bottom of Savage Gulf for many years. The Savage family can trace its presence in "the Gulf" back as far as 1719, when Robert Savage obtained some 250 acres in the area. The observant hiker can also see remnants of early logging operations; the old Savage Gulf schoolhouse; and other long-abandoned signs of early European settlement.

Old Growth Forests of the South Cumberlands

Trailhead: Savage Day Loop (Savage Ranger Station, off TN 399), Palmer

The timber industry was an important part of the South Cumberland economy for many decades. In the deep valleys, well-watered by year-round streams, trees grew to impressive size. Unfortunately, most of the original "old growth timber" was harvested; what you see today in much of the park is secondary re-growth, dating from the early and mid 1900s. On this hike, however, you'll be able to catch a glimpse of some of the few areas untouched by the lumberman's saw. One such location is the grove of short leaf pines on the north rim of Savage Creek, where Red Cockaded Woodpeckers, now endangered, once nested. In the gorge below, the Werner Big Timber Tract is one of the largest old-growth stands of virgin forest in the region.

LEARN MORE ONLINE AT

HikeIntoHistory.org and
FriendsOfSouthCumberland.org

