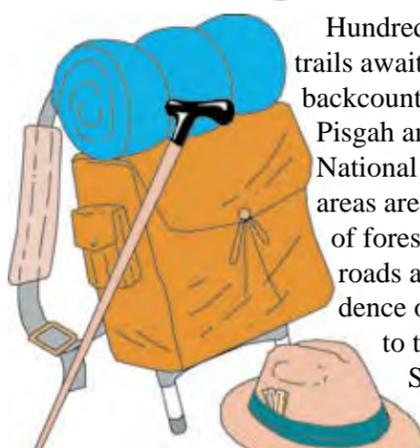


# MTN. BACKCOUNTRY AREAS

AREA	RANGER DISTRICT/ Closest Town	DESCRIPTION	TRAIL MILEAGE	POSSIBLE USES	TRAILS	TRAIL MAP
Black Mountain	APPALACHIAN Burnsville 828-682-6146	Significant elevation change up to spruce-fir forest; steep, rugged, rocky trails	43		8 trails, many loops	South Toe/Mt. Mitchell/ Big Ivy
Blue Valley	NANTAHALA Highlands 828-524-6441	Through side slopes of Blue Valley, crosses small streams and Glen Falls.	8		5 trails, including Bartram Trail	Bartram Trail 1 ROG**
Cheoah Bald	CHEOAH Robbinsville 828-479-6431	High elevation view, steep trails, grassy bald, cascades, shelter	18		2 trails, including the Appalachian and Bartram Trails	Appalachian Trail, FSQ*: Hewitt, Topton
Fires Creek	TUSQUITEE Hayesville 828-837-5152	Remote, high elevation, some primitive trails;	19		4 trails	FSQ*: Andrews, Topton Shooting Creek, Hayesville
Laurel Mountain	PISGAH Brevard 828-877-3265	Streamside & ridgeline trails, some views, high use	13		5 trails, part outside backcountry area	Pisgah District Trails
Mackey Mountain	GRANDFATHER Old Fort 828-652-2144	Primitive ridgetop trails, low use, few signs or blazes	17		5 trails	FSQ*: Old Fort, Marion West
Panther town	NANTAHALA Cashiers 828-524-6441	Stream valley, views, rock outcrops, waterfalls	30		numerous trails	FSQ*: Big Ridge, Lake Toxaway
Shelton Laurel	APPALACHIAN Hot Springs 828-622-3202	Remote, steep, rugged trails, some waterfalls low use, shelters	33		6 trails, including the Appalachian	Good ROG** FSQ*: Greystone, White Rock, Flag Pond, Hot Springs
Snowbird	CHEOAH Robbinsville	Remote, steep, rugged trails, some waterfalls	50		8 trails	Snowbird Backcountry Trail Map

\*FSQ: USGS quad with national forest lands and trails      \*\*ROG: Recreational Opportunity Guide

## BACKCOUNTRY



Hundreds of miles of trails await you in the backcountry areas of Pisgah and Nantahala National Forests. These areas are large blocks of forest with no open roads and little evidence of disturbance to the land. Some trails begin outside the backcountry area and travel through some evidence of resource management, such as wildlife openings, old roads and timber harvest sites.

As in designated wildernesses, motorized vehicles are not allowed in backcountry areas. However, unlike wilderness trails, some backcountry trails are open to mountain bikers. Trailhead signs show who can use the trail.

Most trails are signed and blazed, and the size of the hiking group is not limited, although groups no larger than 15 are recommended. In wilderness, group size is limited to 10.

Backcountry areas offer a vast array of scenic beauty and recreation opportunities. So get a trail map, your daypack or backpack, and explore the backcountry!

To order maps, see Page 4. For more information about a backcountry area, see the above chart for the related district phone number.

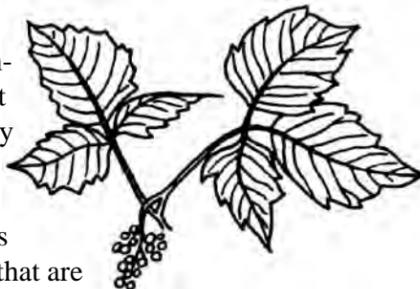
### Look out for these bugs, snakes, plants

**TICKS & CHIGGERS** are present in the mountains and common on the Piedmont and the Coastal Plain. Chiggers cause an itchy welt, especially in warm, tight places, such as under waistbands and elastic. Ticks can transmit diseases. Wear insect repellent in the summer and check for ticks after every trip to the woods.

**SNAKES** that are poisonous are rarely seen, but rattlesnakes and copperheads do live in North Carolina. Cottonmouths live along coastal rivers and in the swamps.

To be safe, leave snakes alone—don't try to catch, antagonize or kill them. Also, avoid putting your hands or feet near rocks or logs where snakes aren't easily seen.

**POISON IVY** is a common plant that causes an itchy rash and should be avoided. It has white berries that are eaten by many birds, especially in the winter when food is scarce. Poison ivy grows as a vine or shrub, but always has three leaflets. Remember: LEAVES OF THREE, LET IT BE.



## WILDERNESS: a primitive experience

Our forests have 11 designated wildernesses, with at least one in each national forest. Because wildernesses are managed to protect their primeval character, signs and blazes are minimal. Wilderness hikers, expected to be self-reliant, should carry a compass and topographic map and know how to use them.

Most trails are open only to hikers. However, the Southern Nantahala and Shining Rock Wildernesses have some trails that are open to horses.

**To maintain the wilderness quality, special regulations are enforced.**

- Campfires are not allowed in Shining Rock or Middle Prong Wildernesses. If you wish to cook, use a backpack stove.
- In any wilderness, no motorized equipment and no bicycles, wagons or carts are allowed.
- Only primitive recreation activities, such as backpacking and camping, are allowed.
- Group size is limited to a maximum of 10.
- Visitors may not remove plants, stones or moss, but berries or nuts can be collected for personal use.
- In Linville Gorge Wilderness from May 1 to Oct. 31, permits are required for camping on weekends and holidays. For permits or more information, contact the Grandfather District at 828-652-2144.