



HUFFMAN CREEK

R E T R E A T

AREA ATTRACTIONS & ACTIVITIES

Hiking

- Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park 20-Mile Ranger Station
- Slickrock Wilderness
- Benton McKay Trail
- The Appalachian Trail
- Cherohala Skyway

Driving

- Cherohala Skyway
- Tail of the Dragon
- Highway 64 to Highlands, NC
- Moonshiner 28
- Blueridge Parkway
- Devil's Triangle
- Great Smoky Mountains National Park Loop
- Cades Cove Loop
- Motorcycle Rentals: Sportbikes4Hire or GSM Motorent

Paddling, Rafting, Tubing & Boating

- Nantahala River: white water rafting, kayaking, zip line
- Tubing on Snowbird Creek
- Lakes: Santeetlah, Cheoah, Fontana, Calderwood, Nantahala
- Fontana Dam/Cheoah Dam
- Dayton Boat Camp Rentals (On Santeetlah): 828.479.7422
- Santeetlah Marina Boat Rentals: 828.479.8180
- Fontana Marina Boat Rentals: 828.498.2129

Biking

- Tsali Bike Trails: Mountain Biking
- Santeetlah Lake Trail



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Fishing:

- Trout/bass fishing, fly fishing, on local lakes, rivers and streams
- Nantahala Fly Fishing Company – 828-479-8850

Arts and Mountain Culture:

- Stecoah Valley Cultural Arts Center: 828.479.3364
- Wehrloom Honey Bee Observatory and Honey Tasting Room: 828.735.2300
- Stoney Hollow Farm and U-Pic: 828.735.2983
- Bee Global Art Studio: 828.479.8284
- Yellow Branch Pottery and Cheese Studio: 828.479.6710



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HOW TO HUFFMAN - ONSITE ACTIVITIES

Welcome to Huffman Creek Retreat! We are so excited that you found us and most importantly, we are just thrilled to share this special piece of the world with you. Over the past few years, our guests have been sharing tips and tricks to properly enjoy their stay and, over the past 30 years, we have picked up a few of our own. Now, in true Turner fashion, we would like to pass the tidbits along to you and yours. So, let's get started.

What to do when approached with this: "Mom, Dad, there's nothing to do here."

Myth: All this nature and green stuff is boring.

Fact: All this nature and green stuff is the coolest thing ever.

To properly enjoy the outdoors, it's important to realize that we are all equipped with this really cool tool called, "imagination."

Those trees out there, they make great hiding spots. That creek out there, it's an entire world just waiting to be explored. That dirt and mud out there are meant to be dug into with wild abandon.

Ideas for approaching the great outdoors:

- Hunt for salamanders in the creek
They tend to hide under rocks and slither into little crannies. These Smoky Mountain treasures are some of the most diverse in the entire world and because of our outrageous biodiversity we have more of these little critters than anyone else. Do be careful when holding these little ones, they





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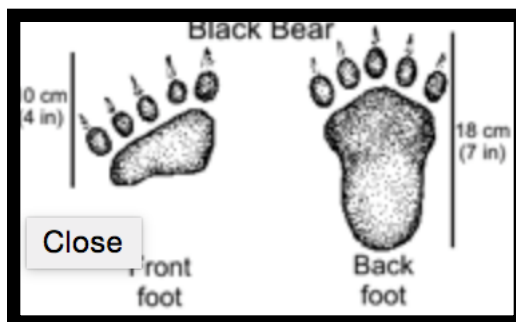
breathe through their skin and can be suffocated if human skin oils are transferred in too great of quantity to their skin. Remember, nature should be handled with care. More often than not, it's best to observe and not handle at all.

- Make rock Cairns
 - o Now, that the heck is a rock cairn? A rock cairn is a delicately balanced stack of rocks. They are great fun to make with kids young and old and the building can be both competitive and creative. Just be sure to deconstruct your cairn before you leave to allow others the opportunity to create their very own, uninfluenced masterpieces.



- Seek out animal tracks
 - o Do you fancy yourself a true outdoorsperson? See how many different animal tracks you can discover as you venture into the woods. Feel free to take pictures and match up to identifiers once you return.

- Hike the Trails
 - o Huffman Creek Retreat is home to several of our very own hiking trails. Throughout the property you will see waterfalls, water towers, hidden mountain tree houses, and much more. Be sure to wear closed toe shoes, bring 16 ounces or more water for each person in your group, and a few snacks. Please be sure to share your snacks only with the folks in your group and abide by the Leave No Trace principles enclosed in this book. Also, for a full listing of property hikes please see our property trail map also enclosed.





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- Make believe
 - o Sword fight with sticks (carefully), hunt through the forest for fairies, or lie in the field and stare at the clouds to see what's in the great beyond.

What to do when approached with this: "The sun went down. There's nothing to do."

Myth: I need to go inside and watch TV now that I've gotten all that fresh air.

Fact: There is more fun and fresh air to be had.

Ideas for enjoying the great outdoors after dark:

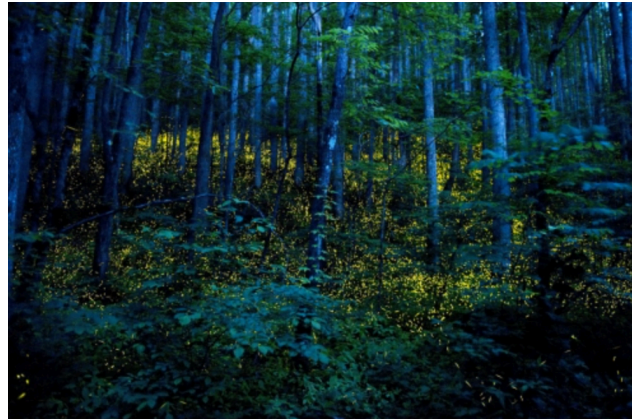
- S'mores
 - o For those of you that may not be familiar, s'mores are one of the very most delicious campfire creations. The truth is enjoying the sticky goodness of a properly roasted s'more is an outdoorsman/woman's right of passage.
 - Step one: select your stick
 - Step two: roast your marshmallow (there is no correct way to do this despite the age-old assumption that someone else is always right. Burnt or slightly golden . . . it's all good)
 - Step three: Place your marshmallow between two graham crackers and a piece of Hershey's milk chocolate.
 - Step four: Dig in and ENJOY!
 - *** For the brave ones: Experiment a little. Try chocolate chip cookies or Reece's cups for a little something extra.



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- Observe the Lightning Bugs
 - o Our region is home to the unique phenomena of Synchronous Fireflies. These little guys come out around the river and stream area in early summer to put on a most spectacular show. Turn off all of the lights, stare deep into the woods, and as your eyes adjust you'll begin to see a pattern in the lights of these fireflies. It's truly magical. Next closest location outside of the Smokies is Madagascar . . . Yes, in Africa.
- Tell camp fire stories
 - o The timeless tradition of scarring folks silly by way of campfire stories is a tradition we highly encourage. After a hearty helping of smores, take turns telling scary stories and see who heads for the cabin first. It's a great way to see that the night comes to a close at just the right time. Are you following us here, adults?



Anecdotes aside, Huffman Creek Retreat is a wonderful place to relax, unwind, and reconnect with the things that matter: Nature, your kids, your friends, yourself, and the rest of the family.



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God's Gardens Nature Hikes and Consulting
(828) 479-1255 | Godsgardens@earthlink.net

Maximum group size - 10

- Kim Hainge will work with you via e-mail or phone so that you can custom design your vacation – Whether you want to see the wildflowers, take pictures, fish, bird watch, gaze at fireflies, see glorious sunsets, play in the water, motorcycle ride or mushroom hunt, we will help you arrange the perfect stay so that you will want to return again and again.

One-hour hike, consultation or presentation about various nature topics - \$40.00

- Spring Wildflowers
- Autumn Wildflowers
- Edible and Medicinal properties of native plants
- Use of Plants by Early European Settlers
- Landscaping for Honeybees
- Landscaping for Birds
- Foraging for edible mushrooms
- Synchronous and Blue Ghost Fireflies
- Joyce Kilmer Memorial Forest
- The Benton MacKaye Trail

Two to Three Hour hikes \$50 for 1 hiker add \$25 per additional hiker

Half Day Hike \$65 for 1 hiker add \$10 per additional hiker

10% discount to active military and veterans

Half Day Hikes include

- Brief overview of destination, difficulty and required equipment
- Review of special interests of customers to ensure the optimum experience

Unique hikes can be designed just for you based on your hiking experience and interests. Descriptions of just five of the many guided hikes available are below.



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1. JOYCE KILMER MEMORIAL FOREST LOOP TRAIL

The Joyce Kilmer Memorial Loop Trail is one of the most popular trails in the United States. Dedicated by an Act of Congress in 1936 to memorialize the poet Joyce Kilmer and his poem "Trees", the beautiful trail is part of the Joyce Kilmer Slickrock Wilderness. The trail consists of a Lower Loop of 1.2 miles and an Upper Loop of 0.8 miles, this trail meanders through one of the last remaining tracts of unlogged forest in the country. The trail is known for its 400-500-year-old Tulip Poplar trees and its wide range of wildflowers. This is a Wilderness trail and is uneven, with steep inclines and declines and many large tree roots and rocks on the trail. Bring good hiking shoes and walking stick and water.

2. HUCKLEBERRY KNOB TRAIL

The Huckleberry Knob trail begins on the Cherohala Skyway. A short hike to the summit of Huckleberry Knob featuring 360-degree views. This is considered an easy trail and is about 2.5 miles round-trip. The trail, actually an old road, passes through open woods to Oak Knob and then on to Huckleberry Knob. The Knob is a perfect place to have a picnic lunch or fly kites. The 360-degree view allows for numerous photo opportunities. A grave marker with an interesting history is part of the tour. Seasonally there is a good supply of wild strawberries and huckleberries for nibbling and it's an excellent spot to admire the stars; open southern skies and no light pollution. The trail can be muddy in places, and depending on the day, weather can be an issue. At this high elevation 5,560 feet you may be subject to a chilling wind.

3. HOOPER BALD TRAIL

Hooper Bald's elevation is 5,429 feet. The trail is, in general, an easy, gravel pathway, although there are a number of medium rocks along the way. The Hooper Bald Trail leads to the beautiful grassy meadow filled with wildflowers and Mountain Ash. It is the home of the famous Hooper Bald Flame Azalea and in June you will be treated to a display of blooming flame azalea and mountain laurel that will dazzle your eyes. The bald is a stop on the migratory paths of both birds and butterflies. In 1908, a man named George Moore, an agent for Whiting Manufacturing Company (who owned the land), decided to create a hunting preserve on Hooper Bald for wealthy clients. Wild boars, buffalo, elk, mule deer, black bear, and Russian brown bear were imported for the preserve. Most of the exotic animals eventually disappeared, but the wild boars dug under the fences, reproduced, and have survived to this day.



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4. YELLOW CREEK FALLS TRAIL

The Yellow Creek Falls Trail is 0.3 miles long. It is most famous for the many varieties of wild flowers and mushrooms along the trail, as well as the gorgeous waterfalls. The trail ends at a spot overlooking the main waterfall, Yellow Creek Falls, and is a splendid spot for either a picnic lunch, a cold swim on a hot day or a wedding! The trail is steep in places and crosses several small wooden bridges. It is a woodland trail and amongst the numerous native plants is a good supply of poison ivy, so wear long pants and good hiking shoes.

5. STECOAH GAP TRAIL

This trail is a pleasant hike along an old forest road. The trail is on relatively level ground that is most known for the migrating birds, such as the Cerulean Warblers, that cross through the area in the early mornings during the spring. Some of the first native wildflowers pop up along this trail and it is a perfect place to learn about the numerous wildflower species this area has to offer. It is possible to hike three miles to its end and then head back to the beginning, a total of six miles. Many people choose to hike for a lesser distance and just turn around when they are ready. The Appalachian Trail crosses Stecoah Gap at the trailhead and the views from the Gap are outstanding.