



Blue Knob State Park

Blue Knob State Park offers year-round wilderness adventures on 6,128 acres of woodland. The park is in the northwestern tip of Bedford County, west of I-99. Altoona, Johnstown and Bedford are within 25 miles of this scenic park.

The elevation of the park can cause air temperatures to be several degrees cooler than the surrounding cities. The annual snowfall averages about 12 feet. One of the unique features of the park is the solitude it provides the visitor. There are many opportunities to enjoy the quiet and refreshing serenity of the mountains and streams.

Directions

FROM EAST OR WEST: Take the Pennsylvania Turnpike to Bedford, Exit 146. Go north on I-99 to Exit 7. Follow PA 869 west to Pavia, then follow signs through Pavia to the park.

FROM NORTH: Take I-99 south to Exit 23. Follow Old US 220 south. Turn right onto PA 164 west, follow to the town of Blue Knob. Turn left onto Blue Knob Road (LR 4035) follow five miles to northern entrance of the park.

FROM SOUTH: Take I-70 west to Breezewood, then US 30 west to Bedford, then north on I-99 to Exit 7. Follow PA 869 west to Pavia, then follow signs through Pavia to the park.

Recreational Opportunities

The park is open sunrise to sunset. Some facilities close at the end of the summer season, but other areas are open year-round.



SWIMMING: Weather permitting, the swimming pool is open daily from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. from Memorial Day weekend to Labor Day, unless posted otherwise. The pool is only open on weekends for the first two weeks of the summer season. Pool depth ranges from 2 to 5 feet. Weekday and evening use is recommended. For visitor safety, diving into the pool is prohibited.

PICNICKING: Burnt House and Mowery Hollow picnic areas are open year-round. Willow Springs Picnic Area closes the Friday after Thanksgiving and reopens the week before Memorial Day.

Seven picnic pavilions may be reserved up to 11 months in advance for a fee. Unreserved picnic pavilions are free on a first-come, first-served basis.

MOUNTAIN BIKING: Several of the park's multi-use trails are designated for mountain bike use. For beginners, Chappells Field Trail is a good challenge. For the more experienced, Three Springs Trail is an intermediate ride. Three Springs Trail is also open to horseback riding. Please be considerate of other trail users. For more experienced and expert mountain bikers, Crist Ridge Trail, Rock 'N' Ridge Trail and portions of Mountain View Trail are suggested.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: About 5,000 acres are open to hunting, trapping and the training of dogs during established seasons. Common game species are deer, squirrel, turkey and grouse.

The park is adjacent to the 12,000-acre State Game Lands 26. This combination of public lands provides many recreational opportunities and offers both easily accessible

Scenic Views

Blue Knob State Park is named for its majestic dome-shaped mountain. At 3,146 feet above sea level, Blue Knob is the second highest mountain in Pennsylvania, only 67 feet less than Mount Davis in Somerset County. Situated on a spur of the Allegheny Front and overlooking the scenic Ridge and Valley Province to the east, Blue Knob has spectacular views. Unique photographic opportunities are available during low humidity weather and with changes of season.

A **northeastern view** from the second highest point in Pennsylvania can be seen at the Expressway Chairlift on leased park lands operated by the ski resort.

A **southeastern view** can be enjoyed at Chappells Field, across from the campground. Included with this view is a close-up of the western slope of Blue Knob Mountain.

A **southern view** can be enjoyed at the Willow Spring Picnic Area.

A hike along the Mountain View Trail provides a **southwestern view** along the Appalachian Plateau from the Pavia Overlook.

Reservations

Make online reservations at www.visitPAparks.com or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday to Saturday, for state park information and reservations.

areas and several walk-in areas. "No Hunting" areas are posted. Permanent tree stands are prohibited on public lands.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

Use extreme caution with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's car, trailer or leased campsite. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.



FISHING: Trout fishing enthusiasts find excitement in fishing Bobs Creek and its tributaries. Streams within the park contain native brook trout along with stocked trout placed through a cooperative nursery program operated by the Pavia Sportsmen Club, Inc. and the park. Fishing is good April through June and in early fall. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission laws apply.

HORSEBACK RIDING: Equestrian trails are marked with orange diamonds. The trailhead is across from the campground entrance at Chappells Field. Horseback riding is permitted along the right-hand side of park roads. Caution must be used on trails that pass through hunting areas. All groups conducting trail rides must secure a special use agreement.

Stay the Night



CAMPING: modern sites, some with electric

The 50 tent and trailer sites are open from the second Friday in April to mid-October. Sites are in open fields and wooded areas. Most sites have electric hookups. Two sites are walk-in only. Water, a sanitary dump station, modern restrooms and playground equipment are available. A campground host is usually in attendance during peak activity days.

CABINS: Three cabins and one house are available to rent. The Fishers Haven and Bear Den cabins sleep four people. The Directors Cabin sleeps six. The cabins are available from the second Friday in April through the last weekend of October. The Twin Fawn House sleeps eight and is available year-round.

Cabins offer electric heat, two bedrooms, living room, bathroom, and kitchen. Twin Fawn House offers three bedrooms, living room, bathroom and kitchen. Renters must supply their own bed linens and towels. A limited supply of dishes, pots and pans, and dinnerware are provided.

In the summer season, the cabins and house only rent by the week. In the off-season, the minimum rental is two days. Advance reservations are recommended.

ORGANIZED GROUP CABIN CAMP: A 100-person capacity camp is available for overnight use to organized groups from June through August. The group camp offers sleeping quarters, bathroom and shower facilities and a large dining hall/kitchen complex. A reservation system is based on previous long-term use, priority for youth groups, length of stay and number of people. Contact the park office for additional information.

BACKPACKING: Constructed in 1977 by the Youth Conservation Corps, Lost Turkey Trail is a 26-mile trail traversing state park, state forest, state game and private lands. Distance markers are at one-kilometer intervals. Hikers should secure maps and information on parking areas, trail conditions and regulations. Many people use sections of this trail for day hikes.

Enjoy The Winter

SNOWMOBILING: Snowmobile routes are open daily after the end of hunting season in December. The trail system consists of eight miles of trails and roads and is marked with orange diamonds. Park roadways are not open for snowmobile use. Please stay on the designated trails. Other off-road vehicles are prohibited on state park lands.

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: Most park trails are suitable for expert skiers. For beginner skiers, Chappells Field Trail and the closed campground are recommended. For the intermediate skier, the service roads, closed roadways and open fields are recommended. Weather conditions on the trails are usually ideal but skiers should use expert or mountain ski equipment.



Downhill Skiing

The park leases the downhill skiing area to Blue Knob Recreation, Inc., which operates Ski Blue Knob, one of the most challenging ski resorts in Pennsylvania. The area offers a vertical drop of 1,050 feet. The ski area provides snowtubing, day and night skiing, with extensive snowmaking, and a total of four chairlifts ensure a fast return to the top of the mountain. 800-458-3403 www.blueknob.com

Environmental Education and Interpretation

Summer programs are conducted on Friday and Saturday evenings at the Buck Hill Amphitheater and Sunday afternoons in the park day use areas, unless otherwise posted. Organized groups can arrange special programs through the park office. Fall and spring programs are conducted for schools and organizations upon request.

Wildlife Watching

Blue Knob State Park is a great place to see wildlife in all seasons. Here are some highlights.

Fall is an exciting time at Blue Knob. Visitors can discover wildlife and plants preparing for the coming winter season. Some animals begin to migrate, others prepare to hibernate, and others put on great displays during fall courtship. Many animals are very active, which makes them easier to observe. The vibrant colors of fall foliage usually peak in the second and third weeks of October. With an abundance of sugar and red maples, the mountain appears to be on fire due to the red and yellow leaves.

Meanwhile, oak trees produce large crops of acorns so that at least a few will escape the black bears, deer, squirrels and turkeys that are fattening up for winter. The antlers of white-tailed deer bucks mature in time for the rut. Brook trout are even more vibrant in color as they spawn in gravel areas. Many birds can be viewed migrating. Look for flocks of robins, grackles and warblers as they gather together before flying south.



Blue Knob is a winter wonderland. The snow depths and length of the season are almost unmatched in Pennsylvania. While it is often difficult to see wildlife, their tracks are quite evident in the snow. Enjoy the winter wanderings of grouse, deer, turkey, coyote and fox as you follow their tracks in the snow. Small animals like mice and voles make tunnels in the deep snow. You can see deer, turkey and red-tailed hawk as they spend their days in search of food.

Spring is a time of renewal at Blue Knob. Sap flows back up into the trees and many animals that moved to lower elevations return to the heights. Songbirds and vultures return, joining the winter inhabitants to nest in the park. A great time to see forest birds like warblers and vireos is before the leaves come out on the trees. Wildflowers rush to bloom in the sunlight before the trees get their leaves. The forest floor can be carpeted in spring beauty, violet and hepatica. In mid-April, you can hear turkey gobblers echoing off of the hillsides and grouse drumming.

In early summer, babies abound. The broods of many birds hatch and fledge, as well as young owls making their first flights and learning to use their voices. White-tailed deer fawns are usually born by mid-June. Black bear sightings are the highest in May and during the June to mid-July mating season, becoming shy and more secretive after that.

Songbirds can be heard singing in the forest canopy and bushes. Watch for glimpses of them as they forage for insects. Larger animals venture into open fields at dusk to dine on tender grasses. Summer brings the most people to the park. Remember that we are the guests and should try not to disturb the wildlife we are observing.



History

The first settlers to Blue Knob arrived soon after the American Revolution. These Pennsylvania Germans moved from eastern Pennsylvania and cleared and farmed land near the fledgling town of Pavia. Early industries were several distilleries in 1812, followed by a log mill in 1833 and a gristmill in 1843.

In the late 1800s, logging companies, based out of South Fork, clear-cut the forests of hemlock and hauled away the lumber on steam railroads that snaked up the steep hillsides. The lumber companies closed from November to March because the railroad could not operate in the severe winter weather.

One railroad followed Bobs Creek and needed six switchbacks to descend the rugged grade. A State Game Lands 26 service road now follows this old railroad grade. Another steam railroad followed Wallacks Branch through five switchbacks. Lost Turkey Hiking Trail follows this old railroad grade.



In 1935, the National Park Service created the Blue Knob National Recreation Demonstration Area to provide recreation to the people of Altoona and Johnstown. The Works Projects Administration employed local workers to build cabins, hiking trails and roads. Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Company 2327 arrived in October of 1939. After building Camp NP-7-PA, the young men aided in creating the park recreational facilities. World War II ended the CCC. On September 26, 1945, the National Park Service transferred Blue Knob to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and it became Blue Knob State Park.

Since the CCC years, facilities of the park have been improved and new facilities built, but the park still retains its rustic, natural character.

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from:

- **Bedford County Visitors Bureau** www.visitbedfordcounty.com
- **Johnstown and Cambria County Convention and Visitors Bureau** www.visitjohnstownpa.com
- **Explore Altoona** www.amcvb.com
- **The Alleghenies** www.thealleghenies.com

LAKE FISHING: Within three miles of the western park boundary, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, in partnership with Highlands Sewer and Water Authority, operates the 345-acre Beaverdam Reservoir. Only electric motors are permitted on the lake. A boating access is along PA 869, west of the park. Special regulations are posted at this access point.

Access for People with Disabilities

This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Call 911 and contact a park employee. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

NEAREST HOSPITAL
UPMC Bedford Memorial
10455 Lincoln Highway
Everett, PA 15537-7046
814-623-6161



For More Information Contact:

Blue Knob State Park
124 Park Road
Imler, PA 16655-9207
GPS DD: Lat. 40.2666 Long. -78.58376
814-276-3576
e-mail: blueknobsp@pa.gov
An Equal Opportunity Employer

www.visitPAparks.com

Information and Reservations

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www.visitPAparks.com or call toll-free
888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7 a.m. to 5 p.m.,
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and reservations.

Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family are your responsibility.

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

- Please camp only in designated areas and try to minimize your impact on the campsite.

- **Firewood Advisory:** Firewood may contain non-native insects and plant diseases. Bringing firewood into the park from other areas may accidentally spread pest insects and diseases that threaten park resources and the health of our forests. Campers should use local firewood. Do not take wood home and do not leave firewood - Burn It!

- Prevent forest fires by having a fire in proper facilities and properly disposing of hot coals. Do not leave a fire unattended.

- Because uncontrolled pets may chase wildlife or frighten visitors, pets must be controlled and attended at all times and on a leash, caged or crated. Pets are prohibited in swimming areas.

- Do your part to keep wildlife wild! Enjoy wildlife from a safe distance and do not feed or approach wild animals.

