

Roan Mountain Recreation Zone



Nolichucky-Unaka Ranger Station



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Steep rugged mountainsides with deep hollows provide habitat for unique natural areas in this Recreation Zone. Unique sites include rock outcrops on Ripshin Ridge, Moffett Laurel's Botanical Area, and the Roan Massif's high-elevation mountain balds and spruce-fir forests. View long-range mountain vistas while driving major highways in the area. Visit Rhododendron Gardens, in bloom around mid-June, but interesting year-round. Hampton Creek State Natural Area and Roan Mountain State Park are prominent features in this Recreation Zone. This area is accessed by US 19E, TN 143 and NC 261. The nearest towns are Roan Mountain, TN and Bakersville, NC.

Explore the Forest! You'll want to walk forest roads and trails to closely explore this Recreation Zone's rare communities. Moffett Laurel Botanical Area off Tiger Creek Road is one of the Forest's most diverse habitats, featuring a woodland of hemlocks and northern hardwoods, forest bog, high elevation seep and many rare plants. Steep and rocky Ripshin Ridge, rising to an elevation of 4,600 feet, offers opportunities to explore unusual communities that thrive on cliffs, bluffs and boulderfields. One of the highest summits in the Appalachian mountain range, Roan Mountain, is richly diverse and home to plants and animals not found anywhere else in the world. Emphasis on wildlife and game management at George Creek provides habitat for grouse and brook trout, as well as amphibians in four scenic ponds. Discover the Neotropical migrant birds and "blackberry pickin' like you've never seen" in the old fields at Hampton Creek State Natural Area. Area creeks offer some of the best brook and rainbow trout fishing in the Forest.

Follow the Trail! A short hiking section of the long-distance Overmountain Victory National Historic Trail runs through Hampton Creek State Natural Area to national forest lands at Yellow Mountain Gap. Crossing Iron, Roan and Yellow Mountains, the Appalachian National Scenic Trail, is the southern boundary of this Recreation Zone.

Picnic in the Woods! Individual tables are available at Twin Springs, Rhododendron Gardens and Roan Mountain State Park. Reserve a pavilion at Roan Mountain State Park or Twin Springs.

Sleep under the Stars! Roan Mountain State Park has facilities for tent and RV camping, as well as rustic cabins for rent in a beautiful wooded mountain setting.



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