

Shawnee National Forest
2012 Fall Color Status for October 24th through 31st



Fall Colors on Oct. 24th

The Shawnee National Forest may be small in acreage, but it's definitely "large" with color!

The fall colors have peaked on the Shawnee National Forest! Sunrises and sunsets are bringing life to the golden yellows and oranges of the maple trees and the crimson red berries of the dogwoods. The sumac has changed from crimson to a deeper purple. Over the next week the wide variety of oak tree species will be changing. Southern Illinois weather is moderate with cooler night temperatures. While the Shawnee National Forest is brilliant with color, some leaves have begun to fall.

If you're planning a trip, consider the following scenic drives:

1) LaRue-Pine Hills Road is located near Anna/Jonesboro area and is about 35 miles round trip from Jonesboro. The drive consists of a mixture of state, county and forest roads. The main attractions are along the winding LaRue-Pine Hills road, which leads you to the top of bluffs overlooking the Mississippi floodplain and the world-renowned LaRue-Pine Hills/Otter Pond Research Natural Area. This scenic drive also accesses Pine Hills campground, several picnic areas and a variety of local attractions (i.e., antique shops, wineries, and orchards). The general location of this drive is southwest of Carbondale, IL.

2) Ohio River National Scenic Byway transverses three states, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois. The Illinois portion is approximately 300 miles and ends at the confluence of the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers in Cairo, IL. The Scenic Byway reflects the culture and history found along the rolling, hilly landscape of the Ohio River Valley in Illinois. It passes through the eastern portion of the Shawnee National Forest near recreation areas such as the Garden of the Gods, Pounds Hollow, High Knob, Rim Rock, Tower Rock, in addition to Cave in Rock State Park and many small historic river towns.

For more information contact the Shawnee National Forest, (618) 253-7114 or www.fs.usda.gov/shawnee or Southernmost Illinois Tourism Bureau, (800) 248-4373 or <http://southernmostillinois.com/>