

Cardens Bluff Campground



Watauga Ranger District



4400 Unicoi Drive
Unicoi, TN 37692
(423) 735-1500

Located on a bluff overlooking the 6,430-acre Watauga Lake, Cardens Bluff Campground offers more than 40 sites, primarily for tent camping. There is a bathhouse with showers and flush toilets. No electrical hookups are provided. Day use areas located nearby for those wanting to take advantage of swimming, boating, and fishing opportunities. The campground is open from late April through mid-October.

While in the area hike a section of the Appalachian National Scenic Trail which follows the west and north sides of the lake.

Scenic parkways US 321/TN67 follow the shoreline of Watauga Lake, accessing several recreation areas and providing scenic views of the lake and forest lands on Iron Mountain. The highways split east of the lake, and both routes pass through farmland, rural communities and scenic mountain views toward Boone, N.C. and Mountain City, TN

Directions: From Elizabethton take US 19E/321 south 5 miles to US 321/TN 67. Turn left on 321/67 travel 3 miles to the campground entrance on the left.

Site Amenities: Even though lake access is limited, the views of Iron Mountain/Big Laurel Branch Wilderness and Watauga Lake are excellent from these sites aimed at the tent camper (sites that can accommodate an RV are limited). Grills, picnic tables and lantern posts are located at each site and most have camping cupboards (covered counter/shelves). A centrally located bathhouse provides flush toilets and showers and each loop has restroom facilities and water hydrants. Campground hosts are located on site. Nearby day-use areas provide swim areas, picnic sites, and boat launches all located along a 4-mile stretch of US 321/TN 67.

Requirements: Please limit the number to five people and two vehicles per campsite. Campsite fees are:

Tent Site, no electric hook-ups = \$12/site/day

Day use fee (for nearby areas) = \$2/day/car.

Permit must be visibly displayed in car. Camping receipt serves as day use permit.

Quiet hours are from 10 PM to 7 AM and entrance gate is locked.

No fish or dish cleaning at water hydrants.

PASSES: Fees with an America the Beautiful or Golden Pass are:

\$12 site = \$6 with pass; \$2.00 day use fee = \$1.00 with pass

Safety: The following rules are in place for visitor safety:

- All food or refuse must be properly stored or disposed of in a bear proof container.
- Campfires are permitted in grills only, do not leave fires unattended.
- Pets must be on a leash and are not allowed on the beach.
- Discharging firearms and fireworks is not permitted.
- No lifeguards on duty, swim at your own risk.
- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.
- Campground speed limit is 15 MPH.



Watauga Lake

