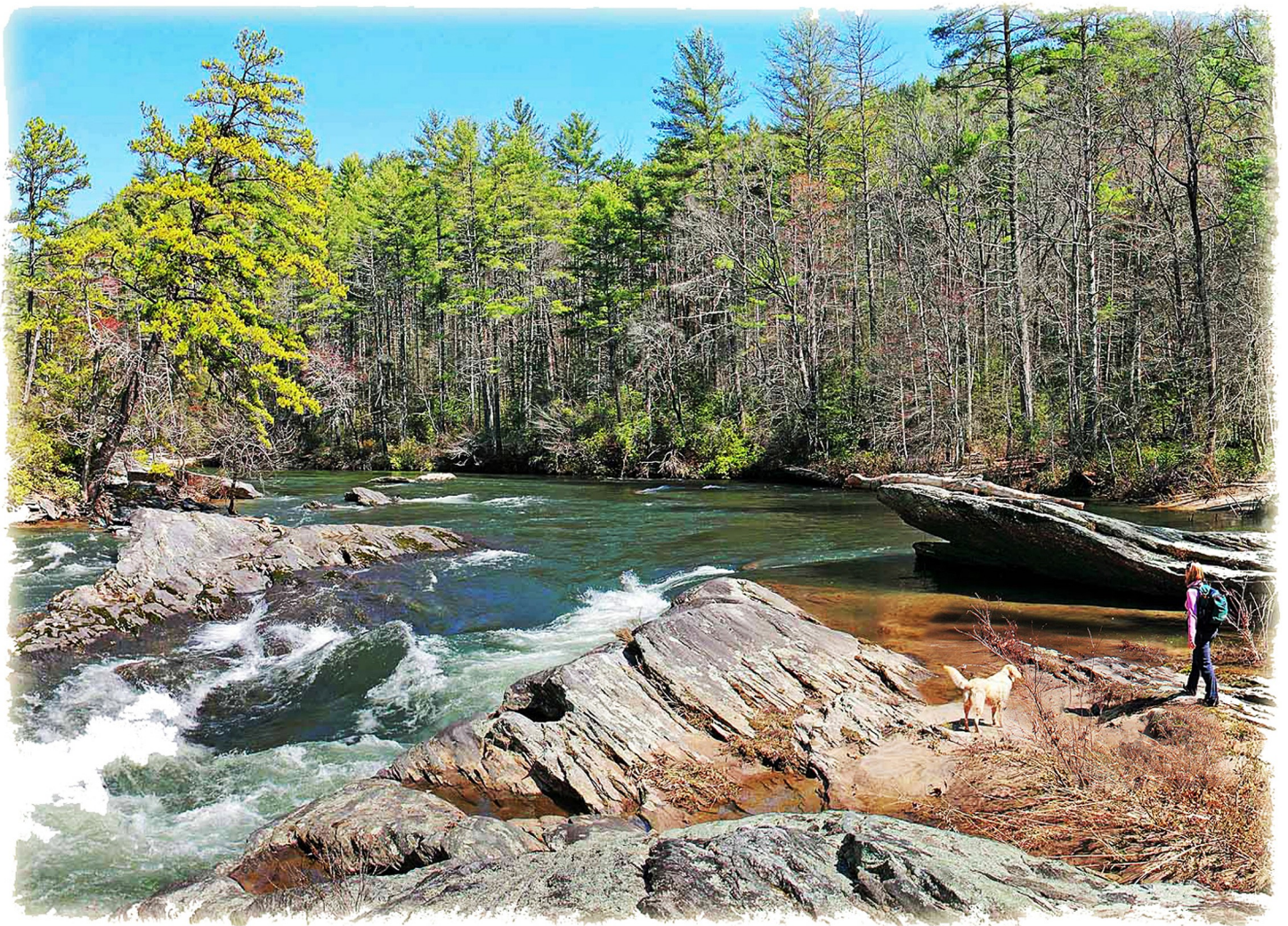


# HIKER'S GUIDE TO THE CHATTOOGA RIVER



Road maps and topographical maps with directions to waterfalls and other scenic locations in the Chattooga River area.

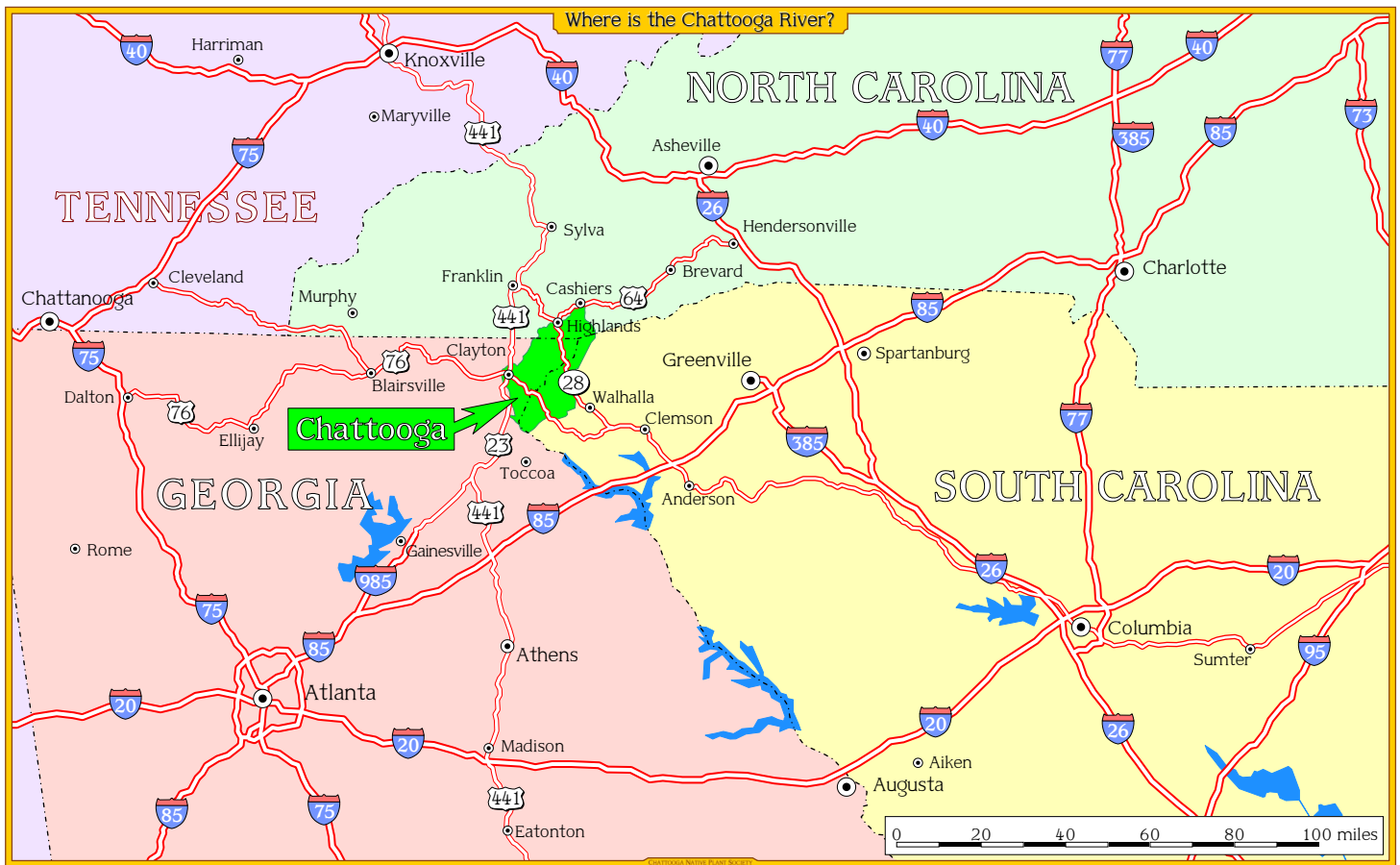
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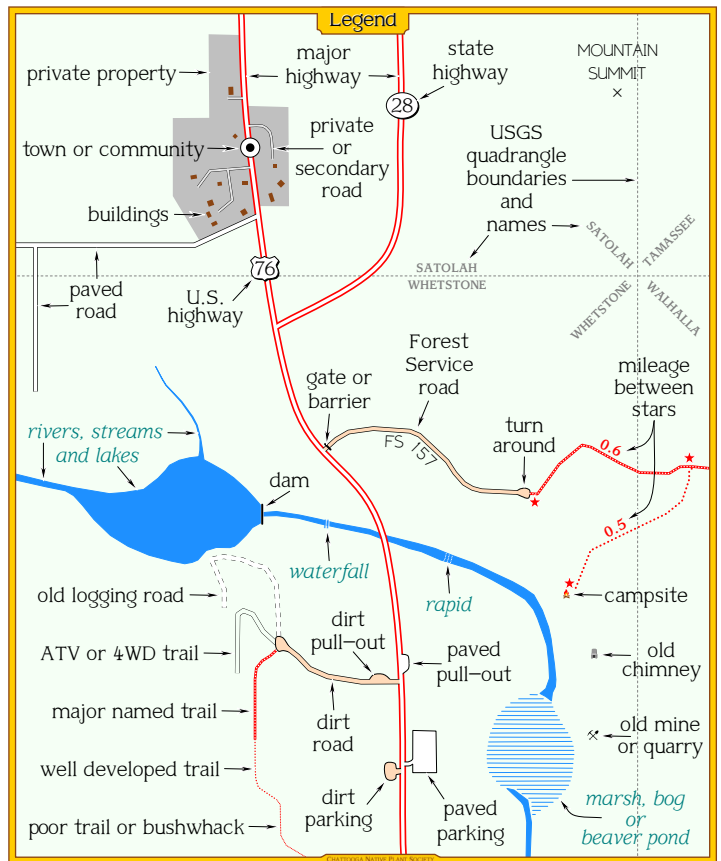


Approximate driving hours to the Chattooga.

Athens, GA .....	1½	Atlanta, GA .....	2
Augusta, GA .....	3½	Rome, GA .....	3
Asheville, NC .....	1¾	Charlotte, NC .....	3
Columbia, SC .....	3	Greenville, SC .....	1½
Chattanooga, TN .....	3	Knoxville, TN .....	2½

### CNPS Maps

There are two types of CNPS maps; road maps and topographical maps. The topographical maps are largely free of text and labels in order to keep them uncluttered. In this way the road maps can be used as a key or guide to the topographical maps. North is always straight up on all CNPS maps; no compass rose needed. The maps were made from U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps, tracks from GPS units, plotting with a compass and altimeter and plain guessing. Many of the finer details such as trail switchbacks aren't always shown. There is some attempt to show the type of trail (well developed, wide, narrow, poorly defined, etc.) with dotted, dashed, single or double lines. Well established trails or well known trails such as the Bartram Trail are drawn as heavy colored lines with white dots. Other trails are simply red dotted lines of various thickness. Very fine red dotted lines may or may not be trails; many of these are copied from Forest Service maps and haven't been verified. A thin gray-filled double solid line is used for what might be called a 4WD (4 wheel drive), ATV (all terrain vehicle) trail or jeep trail. These are most often old logging roads. It doesn't mean that these trails have been designated as 4WD, only that it seems possible that this could be a 4WD trail. If it's obvious a trail is being used as a 4WD or ATV trail it might be labeled as such on the map. Private property shown on the maps are approximations only, may be out of date and not accurately represent true property lines. There is a tiny campsite symbol. Of course there are many more campsites than shown on the maps but this symbol would indicate a well established site with a fire ring. The Eastern Continental Divide appears on some of these maps. The Continental Divide in our area is the divide between the Savannah River drainage which flows into the Atlantic and the Tennessee River drainage which flows into the Gulf of Mexico. It defines the northwestern limit of the Chattooga watershed.



Some maps may not adhere strictly to the above format.

## About this booklet

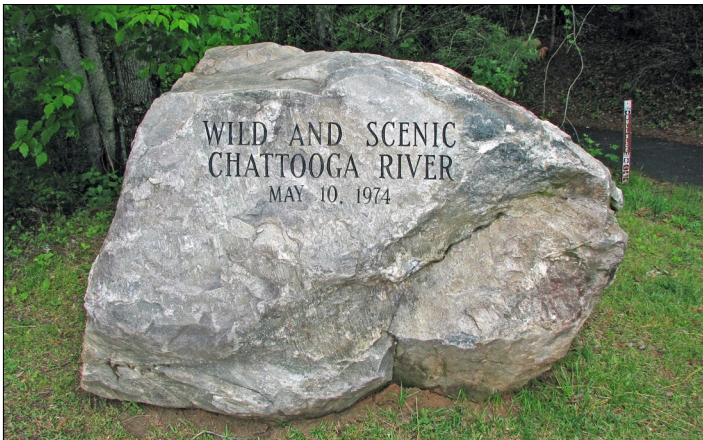
This booklet is for day-hikers or those that simply want to visit scenic and interesting places in the Chattooga River area. It mostly just tells you how to get to a place you want to visit. Originally this was a list of places of interest for naturalists and wildflower enthusiasts so some of these destinations may be of little interest to some; *read about the asterisk page 7\**. The list now includes hikes in general, waterfall, wildflower and river hikes.

### “Our Area”

What is Our Area? The Chattooga Native Plant Society is primarily concerned with a certain geographical area referred to in this text as “our area”. This area forms a pie-segment-shaped piece of the southern Appalachian rim with a total area of about 300 square miles. There are four major areas lumped together;

1. The entire Chattooga River watershed including the Tugaloo Reservoir area.
2. The Chauga River watershed upstream of Cobb Bridge.
3. The Battle Creek and Brasstown Creek watersheds.
4. Tallulah Gorge.

Whiteside Mountain at 4,930 feet is our highest peak. Our lowest elevation is at the confluence of Brasstown Creek and Tugaloo River, below 680 feet, a difference of about 4,250 feet. The protected Chattooga River corridor is about 57 river miles.

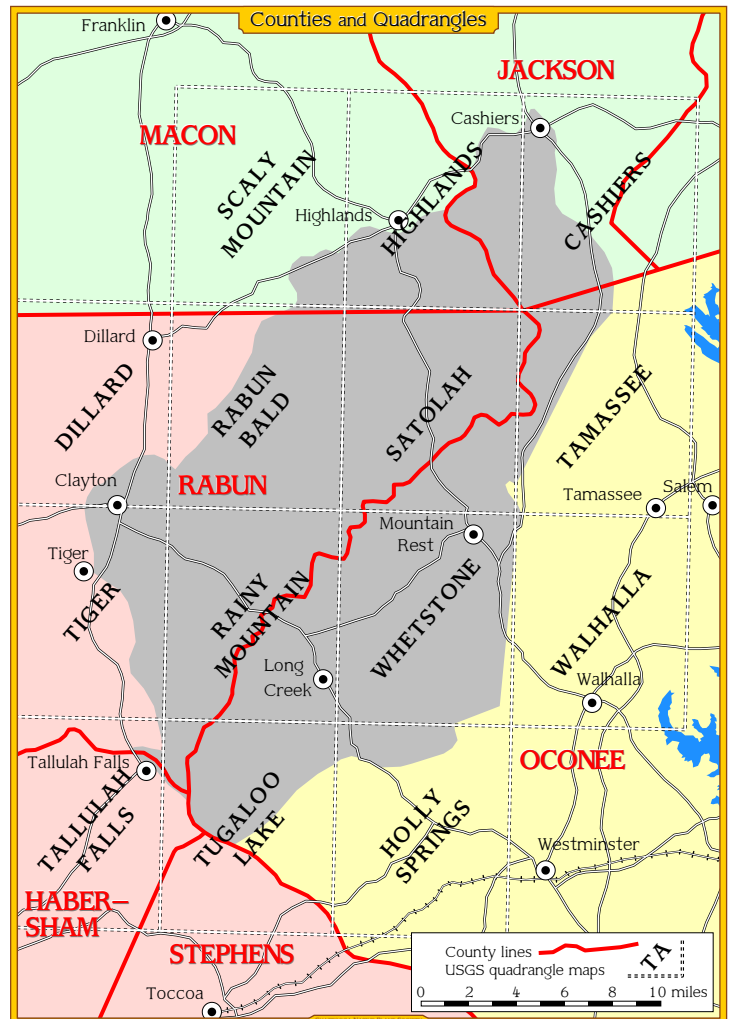


Engraved rock at the Bull Sluice parking lot.

### Available maps

State highway maps (Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina) like the ones sold at filling stations and convenience stores are handy if you are unfamiliar with our area. Some county maps are sold at convenience stores and sporting goods stores. U.S. Geological Survey quadrangle maps are often the first choice for many hikers. The map, right, shows the Counties and quadrangle maps that cover our area. Quadrangle boundaries are also shown on most of the CNPS maps in this booklet. Standard quadrangle maps are sold by some outfitters or they can be ordered directly from the [USGS website](http://www.usgs.gov). There are many maps that can be useful for exploring our specific area. Available maps vary from rough freehand sketches found in paperback hiking guides to highly detailed topographical maps, aerial and satellite photographs. The internet might be the best place to find the specific map you are looking for. There are a number of hiking clubs that offer maps with details and instructions for specific hikes. Many of these sites allow hikers to post written accounts and photographs and include colorful anecdotes and concise information about trail and campsite conditions, scenic views, flora and their personal opinion or rating of a particular hike. If you prefer hiking without the bother of a map you can join a hiking club. Find one that has skilled and responsible leaders that have well planned hikes and a thorough knowledge of the area.

The **Chattooga Native Plant Society** maps in this booklet are probably as good for our area as you can find anywhere.



## Hiking

On May 10, 1974 congress designated the Chattooga River a federally protected "Wild and Scenic River". The strictest protection is within what is known as the Chattooga River corridor. This corridor includes the river and one quarter mile of land on either side of the river. Hunting, development and travel by motorized vehicles is prohibited within the corridor. When you hike in our area you will sometimes see a sign at this river corridor boundary. Fortunately, much of our area is also within the boundaries of the three National Forests; Nantahala National Forest in North Carolina, Chattahoochee National Forest in Georgia and Sumter National Forest in South Carolina. While logging and pine farming is practiced throughout our National Forests it is prohibited within the river corridor. Most of the hiking and camping rules are already understood by most hikers; things like building fires, littering and using the bathroom in the woods. There are plenty of rules posted by the Forest Service at numerous places throughout our area. Checking these boards for updated information is a good idea.

Many Forest Service roads and official trails are marked with a Carsonite sign. The signs are about 3.5 inches wide, 3 feet tall, brown fiberglass composite material marketed by Carsonite International. Because the signs are brown and small they can be difficult to spot, especially while driving. However, this design is a pretty good choice since it has minimal impact on the scenery. The Forest Service does seem to have trouble squeezing their



Carsonite signs



Motorized vehicles are not allowed in the river corridor.

abbreviations onto them. Many of our roads and trails are marked with surveyor's tape of various colors. Forest Service employees, hunters and hikers tie the tape to shrubs and trees to designate points that are of interest to them. Removing tape that has fallen to the ground is good but removing tape that is still tied to trees and limbs is a decision one needs to make for themselves. Removing litter as you hike is a great idea but some areas would require excessive effort that would turn a hike into a cleanup. I applaud those willing to take out litter and hold nothing against those that choose not to. For those that knowingly litter I have nothing good to say. Mylar balloon remains from so called "balloon releases" are common in our forests. We all litter by accident on occasion so we can all do better.

Hikes in this booklet are for day-hikers. This means an overnight hike isn't required to complete the hike. Our area is within the transition zone between the piedmont and the Blue Ridge Mountains. Throughout our area there are steep ridges, deep thickly vegetated coves and rocky rivers and streams. It's been said that, in this kind of country, day-hikes are best when they don't exceed eight miles in total length. That sounds like a good reasonable guide line although when we have optimal weather and trail conditions 10 or 12 miles is reasonable. Hikers hike for different reasons; there's usually a goal. Those looking for exercise might hike at a fast pace and time the hike to measure their speed. Others simply want to view a waterfall, reach a mountain summit or take a leisurely walk in the forest.

Directions to locations are given from key points such as bridges and intersections shown on the "Our Area" map, page 8. Coordinates for streams are for the confluence of that stream with a major stream or the river unless otherwise stated. Some coordinates such as cliff areas, ridges and gorges, are for the general area. Coordinates for Forest Service roads and trails are for the beginning of the road or trail (trailhead). There are numerous formats for writing coordinates. A common format for GPS coordinates is N 34° 45.924', W 83° 12.630'. Garmin GPS software uses a simplified format; N34 45.924 W83 12.630. The degree and minute symbols are just assumed. To reduce errors the Garmin coordinates are transferred



Older Forest Service sign

to a computer, then copied and pasted into word processing documents. You can also paste these coordinates into Internet maps searches or Garmin software. Most GPS software will accept and convert these coordinates to the format you prefer. My GPS software gives distances in feet but when the distance surpasses 528 feet (0.1 mile) it rounds the distance **down** to 0.1 mile. I could look at the track properties and add up the feet in each leg but that's not practical. Distances in miles in this guide should be accurate to much less than one tenth of a mile.

If you hike a lot in our area one thing you will quickly notice is the overabundance of trails and old logging roads. Care must be taken not to disturb the soil or damage the vegetation when hiking off the trail. Great care must also be taken when approaching cliff areas from the top. Dangerous slopes that deceptively increase in steepness as you travel downward are common in our area. A rope can be handy when exploring or navigating areas with small vertical drops or steep slopes with fragile soil that might otherwise take some time to go around. You can loop a rope around a tree and walk it down the slope.

Names and stuff. There is much variability in the way proper names are written. There is a natural tendency to include the apostrophe in names like Sutton's Hole. If you check your dictionary you will find that the apostrophe isn't used in proper names. Sutton's Hole becomes Suttons Hole. Proper names are often the combination of two or more words like Fishtrap or Spoonauger. I usually try to just go with the flow and use the more often seen name or the one I like.

#### Some hiking terms that might be in the text –

**bushwhack, bushwhacking;** hiking off the trail.

**contouring;** hiking along a contour line more or less maintaining the same elevation.

**contouring up, contouring down;** hiking along a contour line but angling slightly upward or downward.

**cove;** a ravine, valley, gorge, canyon or gully formed by a stream or even a small drainage or any indentation of a contour line that resembles a cove. These contour line indentations are called crenulations by at least one botanist. Taking notice of these crenulations can often be very useful in determining your location when using a printed topographical map.

**grotto;** overhanging cliff area, rockhouse – can be very small to very large.

**Rhododendron thicket;** very thick vegetation, can be Mountain Laurel, a mix or other species.

**river left, river right;** river left is the left bank of the river looking downstream, river right, the right bank looking downstream. Also used for streams, coves or drainages of any size.

**tank trap;** a deep hole often preceded or followed by a mound of dirt blocking a trail. This is an effort by the Forest Service to block motorized traffic.

#### Finally\*

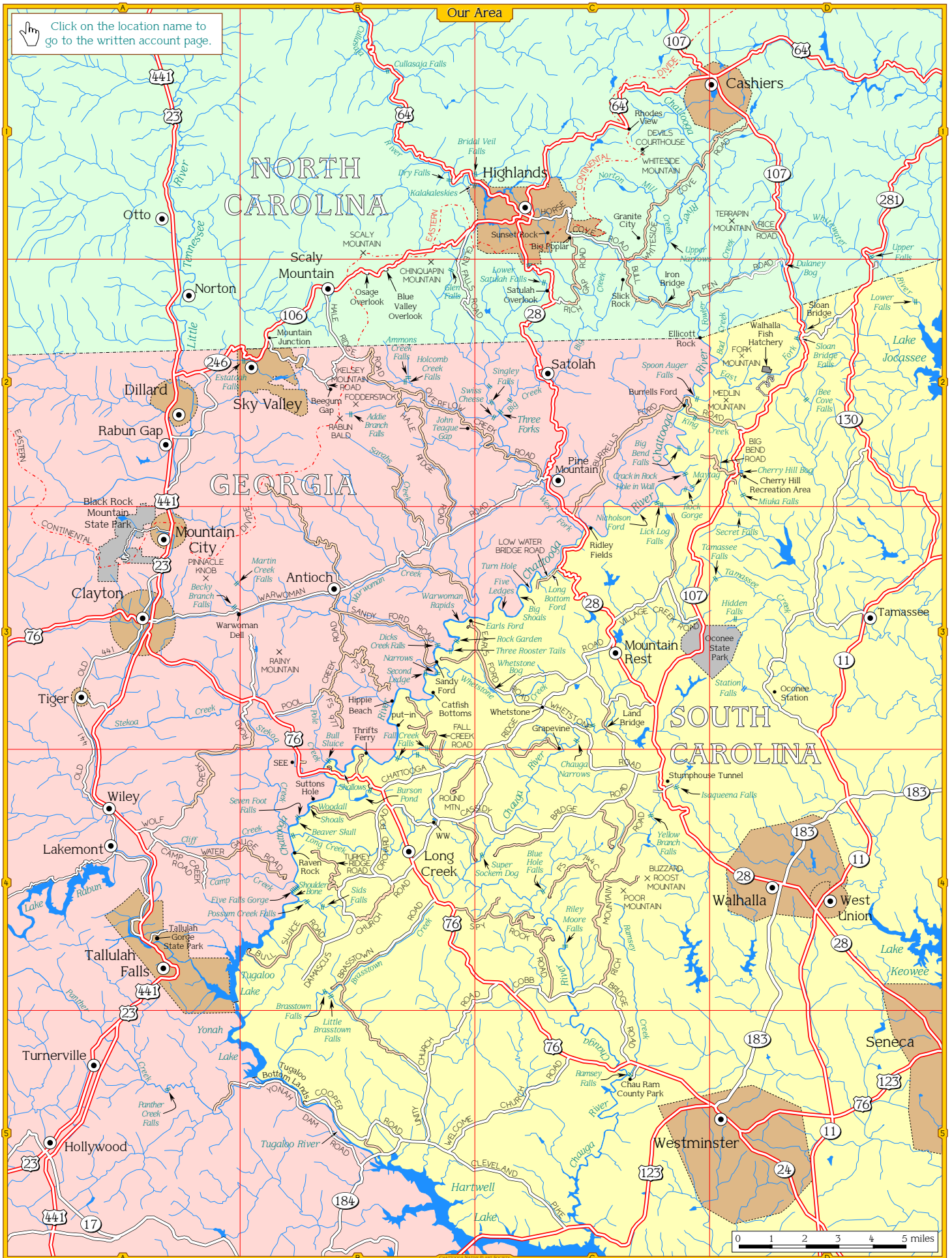
What does that asterisk mean? In the past, some hikers not interested in native plants or plants in general for that matter, decided to hike to some of the locations in this guide. They were very disappointed when the locations turned out to be less than scenic. They had mistakenly decided that this list of locations was a compilation of great 'Must Do' scenic hikes. Not so – the list began as a list of locations for plant species listed in the Chattooga Native Plant Society plant list. Locations that have an asterisk (\*) are locations that could be of interest to naturalists, botanists and wildflower enthusiasts. Plants that are special, rare or uncommon for our area might be found in these locations. A list of plants recorded at that location is included in some of these accounts. This doesn't mean all the plants listed are there, only that they have been recorded there in the past.



*Signs like this are common along many of the trails in our area.*



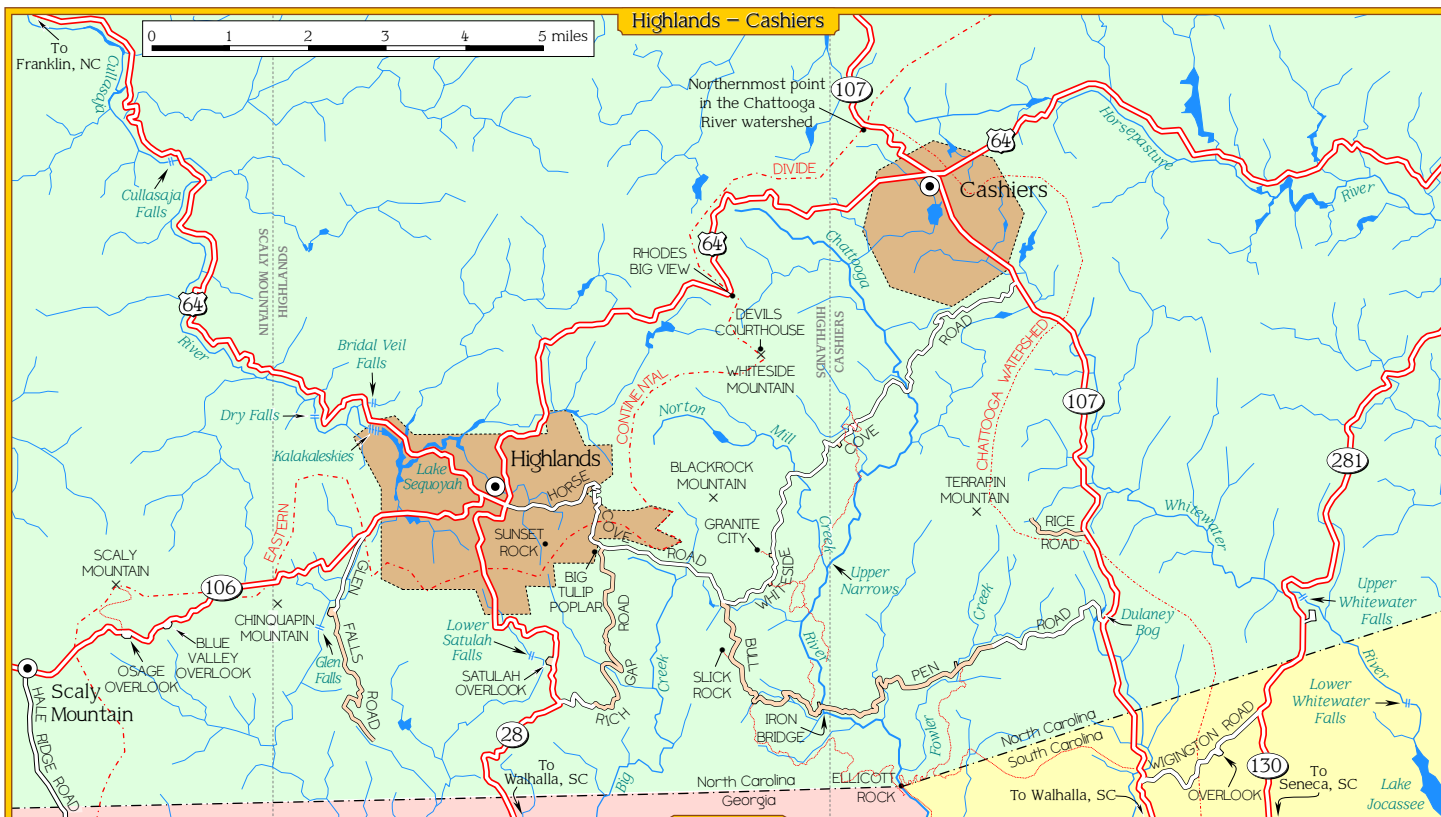
*Botanist Dr. Chas Zartman examining bryophytes at the Walking Fern covered bluffs in the botanically rich coves of lower Panther Creek.*





## North Carolina

The Chattooga River begins its journey in the rich mountain coves of the Highlands and Cashiers area. At an elevation of 4,118 feet, Highlands is the highest incorporated town east of the Rockies. The entire area is very scenic. These first four locations are all on the Cullasaja River just north of our area. Yes, the map below is redundant; a crop from the map on page 8 but with more detail.



### Kalakaleskies map above

Don't know where this name came from or what it means but it refers to the series of waterfalls right after the Cullasaja River leaves the Lake Sequoyah dam (N35 04.049 W83 13.508). When you drive west from Highlands on Highway 64 you'll soon notice a quiet scenic lake on the left. Once you pass the lake, the highway winds downward close to and parallel to the river. You'll get occasional glimpses of the river and notice quite a few pull-outs and picnic areas along the way. Be very careful when swimming, wading or playing around the river in this area. The little pools are very refreshing but there is always another waterfall just downstream.

### Bridal Veil Falls map above

(N35 04.316 W83 13.766). This scenic waterfall is only about 2.6 miles west of downtown Highlands on Highway 64. As you drive on beyond the Kalakaleskies you can't miss it on your right. This waterfall is along a small stream that flows into the Cullasaja River. It's usually somewhat wispy, drops about 60 feet from an overhanging cliff. You can actually drive behind the falls. Until recently the main highway went behind the falls, now there's a little pull-out. Nice photo-op.



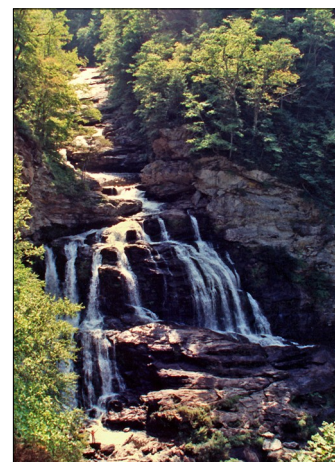
Bridal Veil Falls

### Dry Falls map above

(N35 04.083 W83 14.332). Dry Falls is only 0.8 miles past Bridal Veil Falls or about 3.4 miles west of Highlands on Highway 64. The Cullasaja River flows over a 70 foot overhanging cliff that forms a grotto behind the falls. A walkway goes into the grotto behind the falls. Well worth a visit although the grotto is actually pretty wet and misty. There's a parking area here that is very easy to overshoot as you drive through a sharp curve along Highway 64. Keep an eye out for the Dry Falls sign on your left; you may need to slam on your brakes to make the turn into the parking lot.

### Cullasaja Falls map above

(N35 06.991 W83 16.181). This beautiful falls is about 9.3 miles west of Highlands on Highway 64. That's about 5.9 miles past Dry Falls. This falls does not have a very convenient pull-out although there is enough room for one or two cars to barely get off the road. The Cullasaja Gorge is at its steepest in this area making almost every curve in the road a virtual cliffhanger. Driving west, a passenger (not the driver) will need to look down into and back up the gorge for the falls. It is possible to hike from the highway down to the base of the falls. Look for the person in this picture (blurry). →



Cullasaja Falls

## Sunset Rock map page 9

(N35 02.791 W83 11.317). This is a popular overlook right in Highlands. It's an easy hike of about 0.7 miles one way, all level or slightly uphill. Virtually all of the hike is on a private driveway. Sunset Rock, is a granite bald with plenty of room for picnicking and hanging out to watch the sunset. In downtown Highlands go about 0.5 miles east of the Highway 64 and Highway 28 intersection. The trailhead parking area is on the right directly across the street from the Highlands Biological Station, several Sunset Rock signs.

## Upper Whitewater Falls map page 9

(N35 01.662 W83 01.060). These coordinates are for the entrance to the Whitewater Falls Recreation Area. There's a large parking area, \$2 fee per car, with toilets, information boards and picnic tables. The Whitewater River has two major waterfalls. The Upper Falls (N35 02.150 W83 01.065) is 411 feet, the highest falls east of the Rockies. There are several trails from the parking area. For the hard core hiker there is a trail that goes down into the gorge and joins the Foothills Trail. The trailhead is near the Upper Falls viewing platform located at the bottom of a long series of stairs. From Cashiers drive south on Highway 107. The state line is 8.3 miles and after another mile turn left onto Wigington Road. There are numerous signs at this intersection directing you to Whitewater Falls. After 2.2 miles on Wigington Road take a left (north) onto South Carolina Highway 130. Drive 0.9 miles to the Whitewater Falls Recreation Area on the right. Coming from the south on Highway 107, Wigington Road is about 2.3 miles north of the Walhalla Fish Hatchery Road. The Lower Falls (N35 00.983 W82 59.633) are 386 feet high and located in South Carolina just before the river ends at Lake Jocassee. A spacious overlook on Wigington Road offers a scenic view of Lake Jocassee.

## Whiteside Mountain map page 9

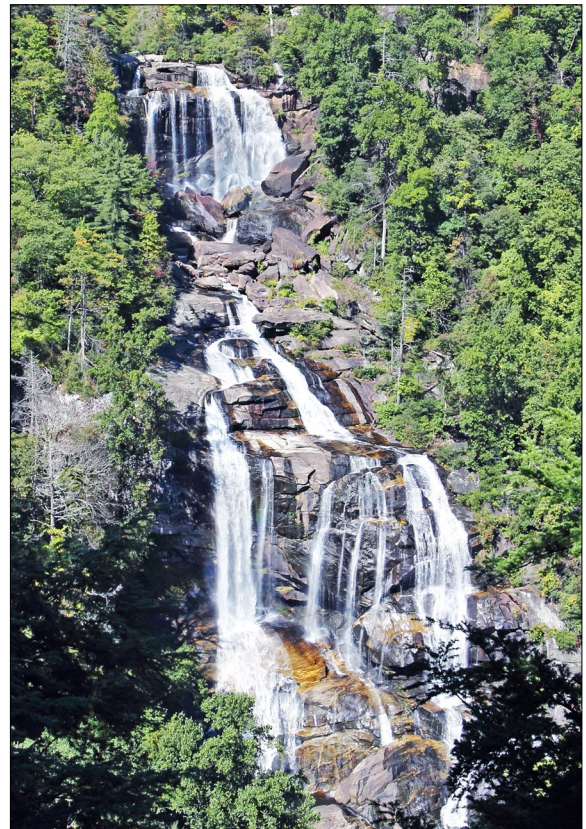
(N35 04.856 W83 08.292). At 4,930 feet elevation and located at the very headwaters of the Chattooga River this is our highest elevation in the Chattooga watershed. There are scenic views from a number of locations along a looping trail around the summit and a trail to the Devils Courthouse (N35 05.249 W83 08.089). On Highway 64, from Highlands travel 5.5 miles east or from Cashiers about 5 miles west and turn south onto Whiteside Mountain Road. Follow signs to a Forest Service \$2 per car parking area with information boards and toilet facilities. A rugged cliff area on the very northern tip of Whiteside Mountain is known as Devils Courthouse. It has a trail skirting the cliffs that can be very perilous if one isn't careful. Read the information boards to decide if you want to hike there.

## Rhodes Big View map page 9

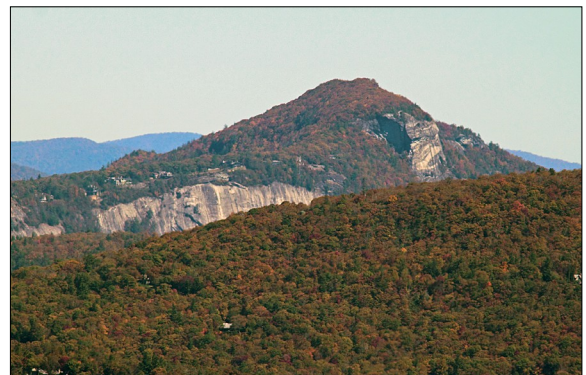
(N35 05.498 W83 08.791). This is a must-do scenic overlook on Highway 64 about 5.5 miles east of Highlands and 4.6 miles west of Cashiers. A plaque at the site gives it the name Rhodes Big View while most people know it as the Devils Courthouse Overlook. There are pull-outs on both sides of the highway. The cove below the overlook, Cowee Gap Cove, is the headwaters of the Chattooga River. Viewed from this overlook Whiteside Mountain can cast a shadow across the valley that has the shape of a bear. It occurs late afternoon in October and November.

## Terrapin Mountain maps page. 9 & right →

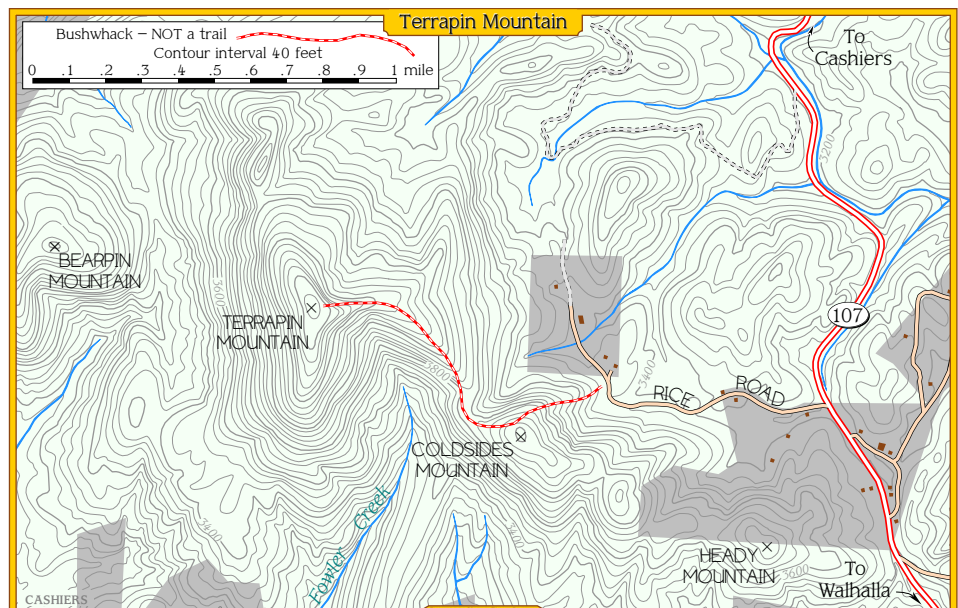
(N35 03.088 W83 05.480) It's a one mile bushwhack to the summit of Terrapin Mountain, elevation 3,980 feet. The beginning of this hike is rather steep and through thick vegetation but once you near the summit of Coldsides Mountain the woods are fairly open. From here vague trails cross the saddle and follow the ridge up to the summit of Terrapin Mountain. Several small balds afford outstanding views of Whiteside Mountain. Drive 0.7 miles on Rice Road to a driveway on the right and park. There is no pull-out. Notice on the map that this private driveway begins in the National Forest. Rice Road does have a street sign; look closely. It is 1.4 miles north of Bull Pen Road and about 5.8 miles south of Cashiers on Highway 107.



Upper Whitewater Falls



A telephoto shot of Whiteside in fall color taken from the summit of Rabun Bald, a distance of 12 miles.

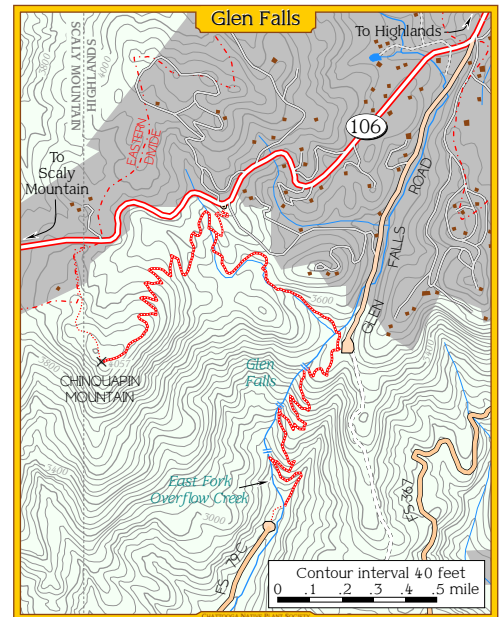


## Chinquapin Mountain map page 9 and right →

(N35 01.972 W83 14.937) A hike to Chinquapin Mountain, elevation 4,057 feet, offers nice views of **Blue Valley**. There are two trails that join and then climb through numerous switchbacks to the summit. At the Glen Falls Trailhead you will notice a Carsonite sign for a trail to Chinquapin Mountain. Hike is about 1.9 miles. The trail crosses the East Fork (bridge) then zigzags across a stream up a cove where it joins a trail from Highway 106. From Highlands this Highway 106 trailhead (N35 02.381 W83 14.527) is 1.1 miles past Glen Falls Road, a small pull-out on the left with a rock in the center to drive around. A 1.7 mile hike to the summit from here. *See Glen Falls next.*

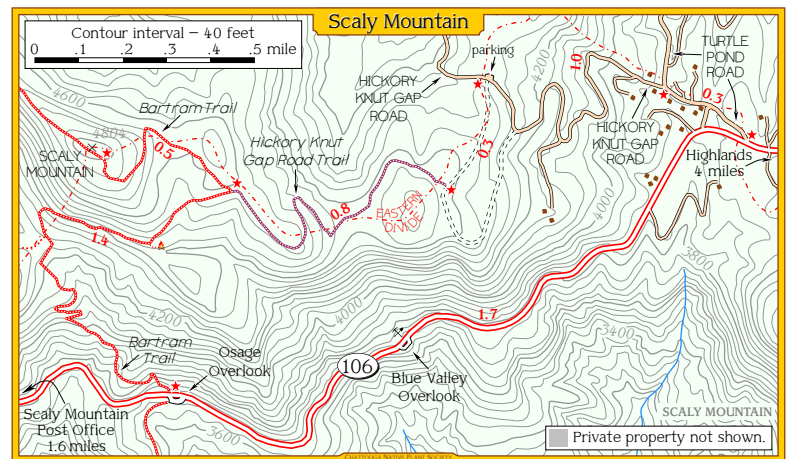
## Glen Falls map page 9 and right →

(N35 01.995 W83 14.151 trailhead coordinates). Glen Falls is a scenic series of three waterfalls on the East Fork of Overflow Creek. The uppermost falls is the highest at about 70 feet. The trail is steep but an easy downhill walk with several switchbacks. There are numerous wooden steps along the trail and guardrails at the falls viewing areas. It's about 0.3 miles to the top of the first falls, another 0.2 miles to base of the first falls, another 0.3 miles to the second falls, then 0.2 miles to the third falls. At the top of the first falls you get a view of Rabun Bald across Blue Valley. From downtown Highlands go about 1.8 miles west on Highway 106 and turn left onto Glen Falls Road. You can't miss the sign, "Glen Falls Scenic Area", at the intersection. There's a parking area with signs and an information board at the end of the road, about 1.1 miles.



## Scaly Mountain map page 9 and right →

(N35 02.226 W83 17.145). At 4,804 feet elevation, Scaly is a great place to get a scenic view of Blue Valley and the surrounding mountains of the tri-state area. The hike to the summit is about 1.9 miles, quite steep, listed as difficult in some accounts. To get to the trailhead drive to the Osage Overlook (N35 01.724 W83 16.934) on North Carolina Highway 106. From the post office in Scaly Mountain, NC it's about 1.6 miles east on NC Highway 106. From Highlands, NC drive about 5.8 miles west on NC Highway 106. Park at the overlook and notice a set of steps at the trailhead on the other side of the highway. This is the Bartram Trail, marked with yellow blazes. After 1.4 miles on this trail you will come to an intersection with a sign –



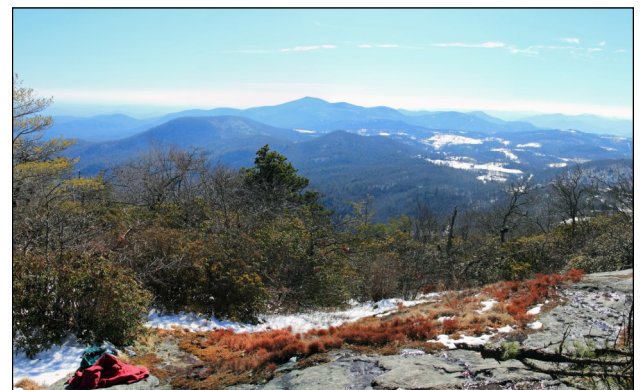
The Hickory Knut Road trail has blue blazes. To get to this trailhead drive 1.7 miles east (toward Highlands) from the Osage Overlook and turn left onto Turtle Pond Road. After about 0.3 miles turn left onto Hickory Knut Gap Road. At about 1 mile look for a pull-out on the right and notice the old Forest Service Road on the left. Follow this road for about 0.3 miles and look for the trail coming in on the right.

## Big Tulip Poplar map page 9

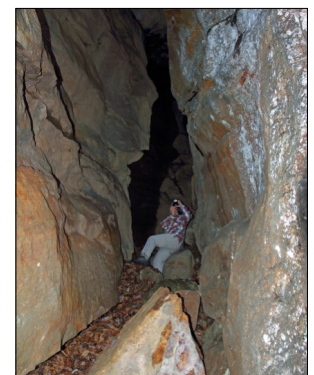
(N35 02.687 W83 10.599) It's worth a stop to check it out and get a good photo standing beneath this giant tree. The tree is located only a few yards off Rich Gap Road. There is a pull-out on Rich Gap Road about 400 feet from its intersection with Horse Cove Road. Look for the trail on the other side of the road. Bear right as you go up the trail, the tree is only yards away. Oconee Bells, *Shortia galacifolia*, have been planted along a nearby stream. Rich Gap Road is partially paved, about 4 miles long, connects Highway 28 and Horse Cove Road. From the Georgia/North Carolina state line on Highway 28 go north about 1.8 miles to Rich Gap Road on the right. It is immediately past Wilson Gap Road. Coming from Highlands go east on Main Street; it changes to Horse Cove Road and zigzags down into the valley. The intersection with Rich Gap Road is on the right about 3 miles from downtown Highlands.

## Granite City maps page 9, 12, 14

(Trailhead N35 02.678 W83 08.252). This is an area of giant boulders strewn along the lower southeastern ridge of Blackrock Mountain. Trails between the maze of boulders are called streets thus the name Granite City. A 0.1 mile uphill hike gets you to an area where trails seem to go everywhere through the many "streets". The trailhead is a small 2 car pull-out on the north side of Whiteside Cove Road. A rocky gully/path going up the ridge is visible just behind the pull-out. From Highlands drive east on main street. It becomes Horse Cove Road as you leave town. The intersection with Bull Pen Road and Whiteside Cove Road is about 3.6 miles. The Granite City pull-out and trailhead is another 1.2 miles on the left. From Cashiers drive 1.8 miles south on Highway 107 and turn right onto Whiteside Cove Road, easy to miss this turn. The Granite City pull-out is about 6.4 miles on the right.



Wintry view from Scaly Mountain; Rabun Bald in the distance.



Exploring Granite City

## Satulah Overlook map page 9

(N35 01.288 W83 11.233). This is a small overlook on the west side of Highway 28 about 3.5 miles south of Highlands or 2.4 miles north of the state line. Lower Satulah Falls is directly in front of the overlook on the opposite side of a steep cove. Rabun Bald can be seen in the distance. Satulah Mountain, with its conspicuous cliffs, is on the eastern side of the highway.

## Chattooga River Section 00 map below and maps page 14, 15

The Chattooga River upstream of Burrells Ford Road is referred to as Section 00 (double zero). The river here is a fairly large stream although there are plenty of places where wading or rock hopping across is quite easy. Remember that the water level can quickly change.

## Bull Pen Road maps page 9, 14, 15 and below right →

This is a long dirt and partially paved road that connects Horse Cove Road (N 35 02.119 W83 08.917) and Highway 107 (N 35 01.883 W83 03.774). Bull Pen Road is on the right about 6 miles south of Cashiers on Highway 107. You will see tractor trailers on the left and a large marshy area on the right. Coming from the south on Highway 107, Bull Pen Road is on the left about 1.2 miles north of the state line. To reach Bull Pen Road from the Highway 28 bridge go north about 10.1 miles and turn right onto Rich Gap Road. This is a paved, then dirt, road about 4 miles long that connects Highway 28 and Horse Cove Road. Turn right onto Horse Cove Road and go 2 miles to the Whiteside Cove Road and Bull Pen Road intersection. From Highlands drive east on Main Street. It becomes Horse Cove Road as it leaves town; about 5 miles to Bull Pen Road.

## Dulaney Bog\* map page 9

(N35 01.891 W83 03.782) This is a large marshy area at the junction of Bull Pen Road and Highway 107, about 1.2 miles north of the North Carolina/South Carolina border. This marsh is impossible to miss once you arrive at the junction. There's some sort of trucking industry on the east side of the highway. The area is labeled Mulkey Gap on some maps. This bog is a study site of the Highlands Biological Station. Turn onto Bull Pen Road and park as soon as you find place wide enough. Walk back toward the bog area and you'll find a very faint trail on the right leading into the bog. Be prepared to get your feet wet here but be careful not to disturb anything in this sensitive study area. Among the rare plants found there –

*Helonias bullata*, Swamp Pink  
*Carex folliculata*, Northern Long Sedge  
*Smilax laurifolia*, Laurel-leaved Green Briar  
*Sarracenia purpurea montana*, Purple Pitcher Plant

## Slick Rock maps page 9, 14 and right →

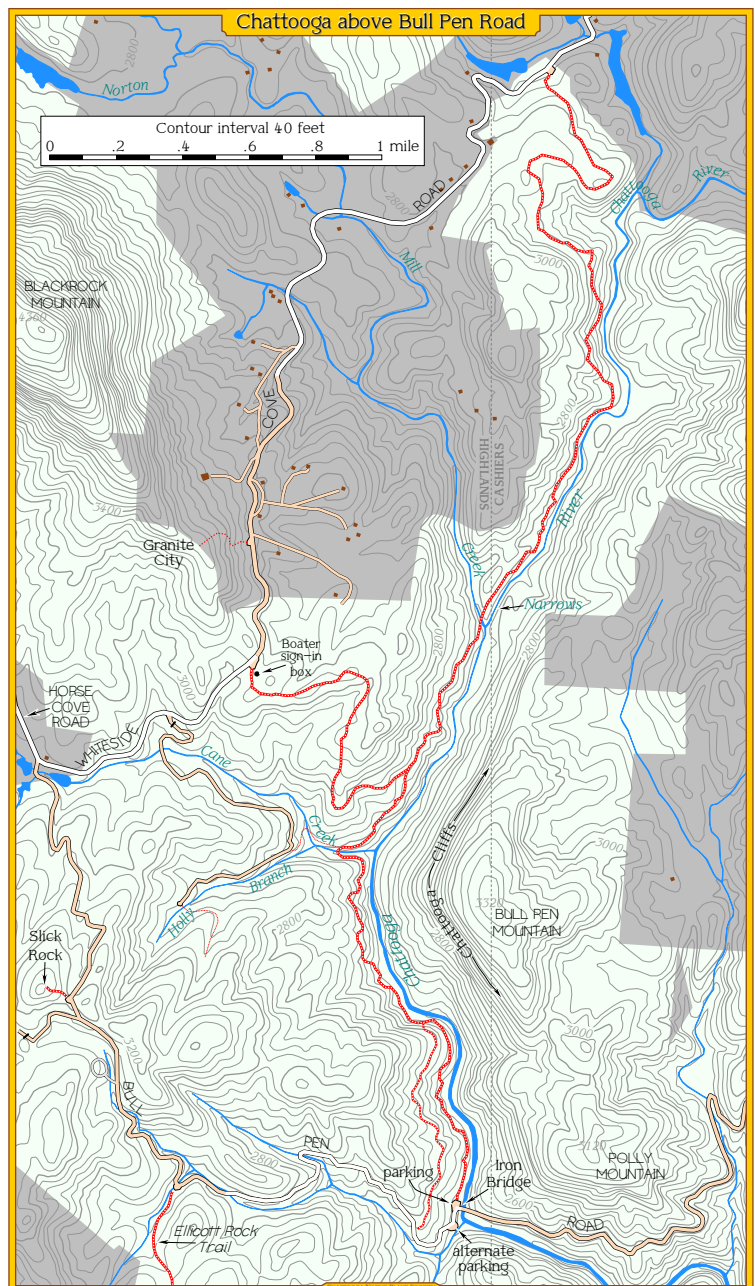
(N35 01.502 W83 08.819). This is a bald near the western end of Bull Pen Road. Hiking to the bald spot is nothing more than a short uphill walk, maybe 100 yards. This bald is misnamed; it isn't at all slippery. The granite has eroded into a very rough texture with many little pockets and grooves. It is a good wildflower location and offers a good view; said to be excellent for sunrises. Much of the rocks are covered by thick mats of Spike Moss, *Selaginella*. From Horse Cove Road turn onto Bull Pen Road and drive about 1 mile to a small pull-out on the right; a Carsonite sign marks the trailhead.

## Chattooga River Section 00 Trail map page 14, 15 and right →

(N35 00.952 W83 07.598 trailhead at Iron Bridge). This is a disjunct section of the Chattooga River Trail. It begins on the west side of the Bull Pen Road Iron Bridge, goes north paralleling the river and ends at a pull-out on Whiteside Cove Road, N35 03.884 W83 07.331. This pull-out is well marked with a highway sign and a trailhead sign. Total hike is about 5.4 miles. Just north of the Iron Bridge the trail has several minor obstructions; slippery and steep rocks, large fallen trees and muddy places. One slippery spot has a rope to assist hikers. A 1.2 mile long trail that goes down to the Chattooga River Trail from Horse Cove Road is called the County Line Trail by boaters. It is in good shape, easy walking, flat for the first half then gently down a ridge. There is no signage at the trailhead but there is a fire district sign across the road from the pull-out, N35 02.376 W83 08.239. The Bull Pen Road Iron Bridge is about 5 miles west from Highway 107 and about 3 miles east from the Horse Cove Road intersection.



Lower Satulah Falls



**Upper Chattooga Narrows** *maps page 9, 12, 14, 15*

A few yards upstream of the sandy beach at Norton Mill Creek the Chattooga River is confined to a long narrow chute. This is known by some as The Chattooga Narrows or Upper Chattooga Narrows (N35 02.496 W83 07.500). Another spot further downstream where two large boulders constrict the river is also known by some as The Narrows or The Gorge.



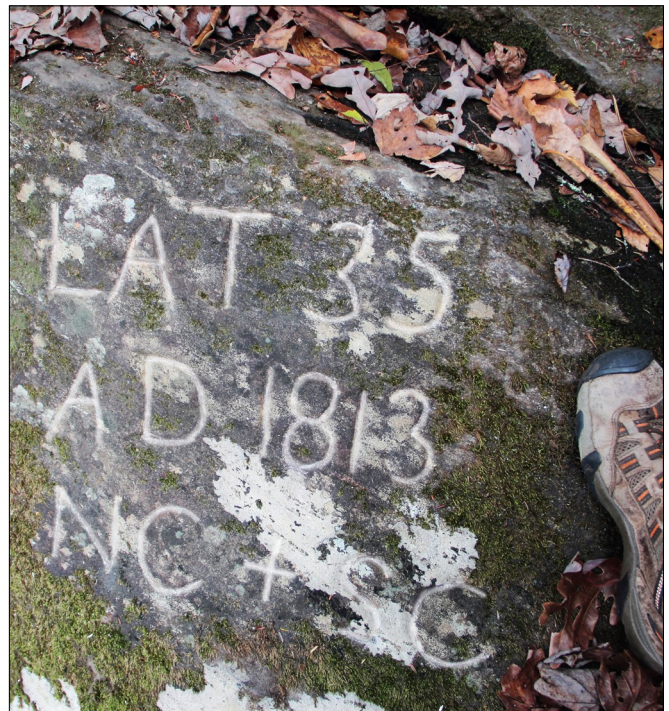
*Chattooga Narrows on Section 00*

**Chattooga Cliffs\*** *maps page 12, 14, 15*

(N35 01.985 W83 07.606, general area). These cliffs are in a remote area on the west side of Bull Pen Mountain. They are almost continuous for a half mile or more near the eastern bank of the river. Hike the Section 00 Trail about 1.8 miles north to the metal bridge (N35 01.876 W83 07.977) at Cane Creek. A hundred yards or so beyond the bridge find a trail or bushwhack down to the river, cross and hike up the other side until you reach the cliffs. In the winter months the cliffs are visible from the main trail but difficult to see when the trees are in leaf. Round-leaved Sundew, *Drosera rotundifolia rotundifolia*, a very rare plant in our area has been recorded at seepage areas along these cliffs and Frasier’s Loosestrife, *Lysimachia fraseri*, is found along the base of the cliffs.

**Ellicott Rock Hikes**

(N35 00.082 W83 06.576 Ellicott Rock coordinates from my GPS unit). This is where our three states come together. There’s a lot of controversy and misinformation about this historical rock. In 1811 a renown surveyor, Andrew Ellicott, was hired by the state of Georgia to determine the exact spot where Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina meet. His surveying team determined the spot and inscribed “NC — GA” on a rock in the Chattooga River. In 1813 another team was commissioned by North Carolina and South Carolina to locate this spot. They engraved a nearby rock on the east riverbank with the inscription “LAT 35 AD 1813 NC + S.C”. This 1813 rock is named “Commissioner’s Rock” but is most often referred to as Ellicott’s Rock. Hikers usually have some difficulty trying to locate either one of these rocks. From time to time there have been trailside signs marking the spot where you descend the few feet down to the rock. The engraving is very faint and often covered with leaves. Visitors who find the rock often scratch the dirt and lichens out of the engraved letters and numbers to make them more photogenic. It is best to look for these rocks at low or normal water levels.



*Ellicott Rock (engraving photo-enhanced).*

Five very nice hikes to Ellicott Rock. Trails with one way mileage –

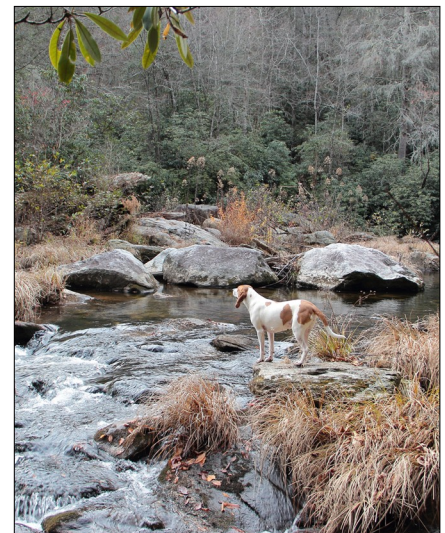
- Bad Creek Trail from Bull Pen Road ..... 3.3
- Sloan Bridge Trail from Highway 107..... 7.9
- Chattooga River Trail from Burrells Ford..... 3.5
- Ellicott Rock Trail from Bull Pen Road ..... 4.4
- East Fork Trail from Walhalla Fish Hatchery..... 4.2

**Bad Creek Trail** *maps page 14, 15*

(N35 01.411 W83 05.702). Bad Creek Trail, from Bull Pen Road to Ellicott Rock, is 3.3 miles long and easy walking, mostly level or gently inclined up or down on top of the ridge. The trail doesn’t go real close to Bad Creek although a portion of the trail is parallel to and about 0.2 miles west of the stream. The final descent from the end of the ridge down to the river is very steep but there are several switchbacks making it quite easy. There is one fork in the trail at about 1.9 miles; the intersection with the Sloan Bridge Trail, has signs. Another 1.2 miles of switchbacks and the trail ends at riverside campsite with Ellicott Rock only 0.2 miles downstream. To get to the trailhead turn onto Bull Pen Road from Highway 107 and go about 2.6 miles to the Fowler Creek parking area on the right (N35 01.389 W83 05.745). The trailhead is a few yards back up the road on the other side of Fowler Creek.

**Ellicott Rock Trail** *maps page 14, 15*

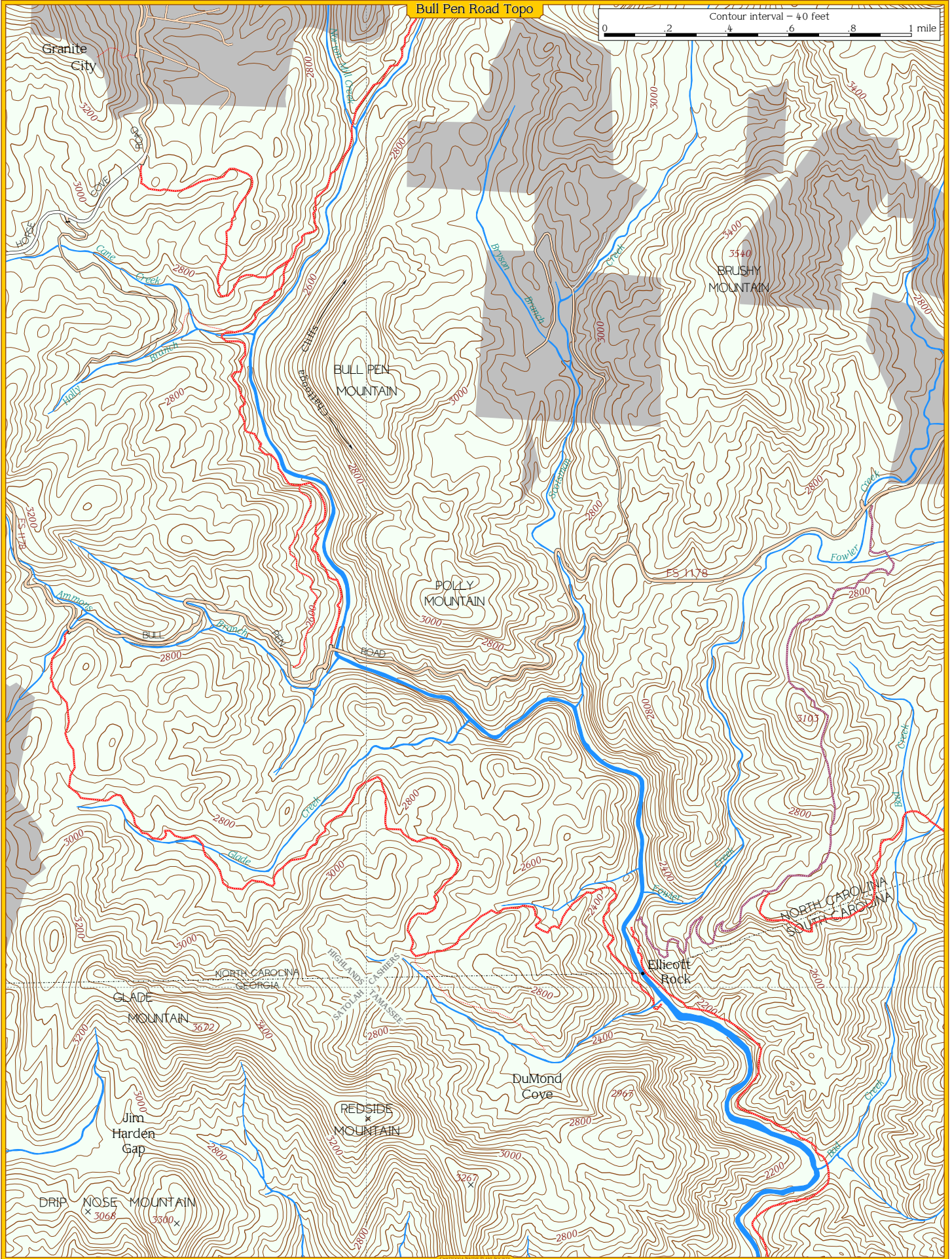
(N35 01.411 W83 05.702). This trail begins at Bull Pen Road and ends at a spot on the Chattooga River about 0.1 mile downstream of Ellicott Rock. The trail, about 4.4 miles, is easy walking but has numerous windfalls to work through. Near the river the trail crosses a small stream and goes a few yards down to the river. It’s an easy wade crossing the river here at normal water levels but the rocks are very slippery. From Horse Cove Road turn onto Bull Pen Road and go about 1.8 miles. The Ellicott Rock Trail will be on your right. If you drive from the Highway 107 end of Bull Pen Road the trailhead is on the left about 1.4 miles beyond the Chattooga River bridge. There are signs and an information board at the trailhead.



*Chattooga River near Ellicott Rock.*



Bull Pen Road Topo



**Sloan Bridge Trail, Fork Mountain Trail** maps page 14, 15

(N35 00.206 W83 03.259). This trail is quite long at 6.3 miles and another 1.6 miles down to Ellicott Rock on the Bad Creek Trail. It goes from Sloan Bridge on Highway 107 across Fork Mountain and joins the Bad Creek Trail just northeast of Ellicott Rock. There are scenic views along this trail as it crosses Fork Mountain, Oconee County's highest peak at 3,294 feet. The trailhead is on Highway 107 about 2.5 miles north of the Fish Hatchery Road or only 0.2 miles north of Wigington Road, the cutoff to Whitewater Falls. Going south on Highway 107, Sloan Bridge is only about 0.9 miles south of the North Carolina/South Carolina state line. You'll find a large parking area just south of the bridge with posted information about the trail.

**East Fork Trail to Ellicott Rock** maps page 14, 18, 68

(N34 59.117 W83 04.360). This is a great wildflower trail that goes from the Walhalla Fish Hatchery to the Chattooga River Trail near the confluence of the East Fork and the Chattooga River. The trail is about 2.5 miles long, easy walking. It parallels the East Fork for the entire distance although only the lower portion of the trail is close to the stream. To get to Ellicott Rock you must then hike 1.7 miles north on the Chattooga River Trail. This is a one way hike of 4.2 miles from the Hatchery. From the Fish Hatchery parking lot follow the walkway, bearing left, to the pavilion. The trailhead is on the right corner of the pavilion. See *East Fork Chattooga River* below.

**Chattooga River Trail to Ellicott Rock** entire trail map on page 68

Hiking north from Burrells Ford, Ellicott Rock is only 3.5 miles on the Chattooga River Trail. It's 1.8 miles to the junction with the East Fork Trail and another 1.7 up to Ellicott Rock. At the Burrells Ford parking area you will find information boards showing several trailheads. If you take the trail near the bridge you will find a Carsonite sign at about 0.2 miles marking a spur trail up to Spoon Auger Falls, steep but easy 150 yard hike. There are numerous fisherman trails and campsites along the river here. The trail that begins across the road from the Burrells Ford parking area is the actual Chattooga River Trail. It bypasses the intensive fishing/camping area that's close to the river. For more info See *Burrells Ford* page 17, page 18 for another map.

**Walhalla Fish Hatchery** maps page 18, 68

(N34 59.144 W83 04.273). The entrance to the Walhalla Fish Hatchery is on Highway 107 about 12 miles north of the Highway 28 and Highway 107 intersection north of Walhalla. That's about 10.6 miles south of Cashiers or about 3.4 miles south of the state line. There is parking and a picnic area with facilities at the hatchery. The hatchery raises trout that are released in various rivers for fishermen.

**East Fork Chattooga River, East Fork Trail** maps page 14, 18, 68

(N34 59.151 W83 06.120). This stream begins about 4 miles north of the Walhalla Fish Hatchery, flows south along Highway 107 then westward to the Chattooga River. The East Fork Trail goes alongside the stream for most of the distance from the hatchery to the river. This lower portion of the East Fork and surrounding coves downstream of the hatchery is possibly the most botanically diverse area in the Chattooga River drainage. The area around the hatchery has lost its South Carolina record holding Hemlocks to the Woolly Adelgid. The area is now full of huge stumps and fallen trees. The East Fork Trail is still a must do for the wildflower enthusiasts; about 2.5 miles from the Hatchery to the river. A few of the plants;

*Aristolochia macrophylla*, Dutchman's Pipe  
*Boykinia aconitifolia*, Brook Saxifrage  
*Carex appalachica*, Appalachian Sedge  
*Carex austro-caroliniana*, South Carolina Sedge  
*Carex communis amplisquama*, Fort Mountain Sedge  
*Carex manhartii*, Manhart's Sedge  
*Carex scabrata*, Rough Sedge  
*Carex woodii*, Pretty Sedge  
*Caulophyllum thalictroides*, Blue Cohosh

*Clintonia umbellulatta*, Speckled Wood Lily  
*Cypripedium parviflorum*, Yellow Lady's Slipper  
*Deparia acrostichoides*, Silvery Glade Fern  
*Diphylleia cymosa*, Umbrella Leaf  
*Galearis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis  
*Hepatica acutiloba*, Sharp-lobed Hepatica  
*Huperzia porophila*, Rock Club Moss  
*Isotria medioloides*, Small Whorled Pogonia  
*Melantherum parviflorum*, Appalachian Bunch Flower

*Thaspium trifoliatum aureum*, Yellow Meadow Parsnip  
*Thaspium trifoliatum trifoliatum*, Purple Meadow Parsnip  
*Trautvetteria carolinensis*, Tassel Rue  
*Trillium catesbaei*, Catesby's Trillium  
*Trillium grandiflorum*, Large-flowered Trillium  
*Trillium simile*, White Trillium  
*Trillium undulatum*, Painted Trillium  
*Trillium vaseyi*, Vasey's Trillium  
*Ulmus rubra*, Slippery Elm

**Foothills Trail** map page 68

The Foothills Trail enters the Chattooga watershed in this area. It comes from the Lower Whitewater Falls area and crosses Highway 107 near Sloan Bridge. It then goes south, crosses Walhalla Fish Hatchery Road, Medlin Mountain and joins the Chattooga River Trail near Burrells Ford. See *Medlin Mountain* next.



A visit to the Walhalla Fish Hatchery is very worthwhile. You can see firsthand the entire process of producing and raising trout.



These long concrete pools of cool running water contain millions of trout in various stages of development. The fish are very spooky so they ask that you do not harass them. There are no barriers so you do need to be very careful with children.



Warning sign at the Walhalla Fish Hatchery.





## Medlin Mountain *maps page 18, 20*

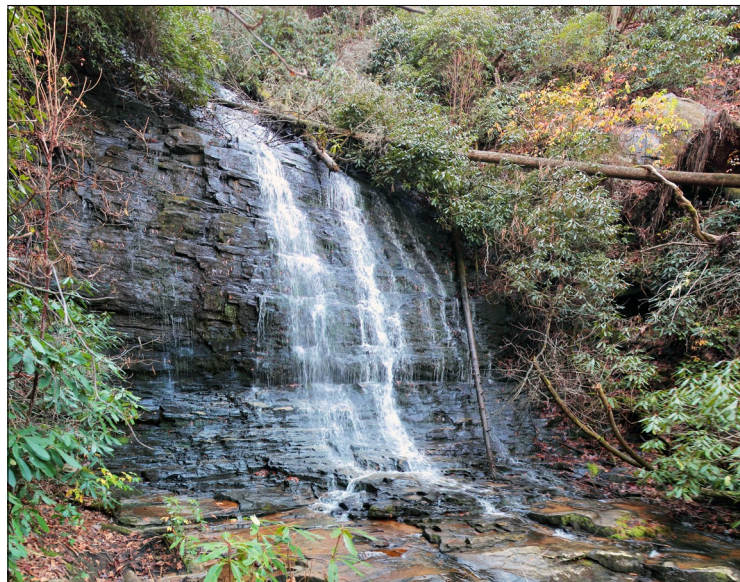
(N34 58.564 W83 04.963). Elevation 3,141 feet. This is a remote and complex mountain ridge east of Burrells Ford and southwest of the Walhalla Fish Hatchery. The Foothills Trail goes west from Fish Hatchery Road along the Medlin Mountain ridge to Burrells Ford. The trailhead, N34 58.620 W83 04.423, is on the left side of Fish Hatchery Road little more than 0.1 miles from Highway 107. The hike from Fish Hatchery Road down to Burrells Ford is a surprisingly easy hike. There aren't any steep places. The trail across the top of Medlin Mountain, is fairly level and in periods of good visibility you are continually thinking there will be a panorama of nearby mountains but it never really happens. At 3.3 miles the trail forks. The trail to the right goes 1.1 miles upriver to join the Chattooga River Trail. The trail to the left goes 0.5 miles down to the Burrells Ford parking area. A spur trail on the Chattooga River Trail goes up to Spoon Auger Falls. For the hardcore naturalist there's a rewarding bushwhack from the summit of Medlin Mountain half mile down the north facing slope to the East Fork Trail. Most all open woods, nice grottos and seepage areas. Hike out the East Fork Trail.

## Spoon Auger Falls *map page 18*

(N34 58.483 W83 06.611). Also known as Rock Cliff Falls on a stream that enters the Chattooga River, river left, upstream of the Burrells Ford Bridge. From Burrells Ford Road hike north on the Chattooga River Trail about 0.2 miles. A Carsonite sign marks a short trail to the falls, about 150 yards, a little steep but easy walking.

## DuMond Cove\* *maps page 14, 15*

(N34 59.748 W83 06.923). Botanist David M. DuMond wrote about an old growth cove he discovered southwest of Ellicott Rock but didn't give explicit directions to the location. In the mid 90s Dr. Chas Zartman conducted a search of the area and discovered this cove; now dubbed "DuMond Cove". This cove has large Hemlocks, Tulip Poplars, American Ash, White Oaks, Red Oaks and American Holly. A few tree measurements were taken on a 1997 field trip. At least one Hemlock was 55 inches DBH, half dozen or more over 40 inches DBH. Many Tulip Trees over 40 inches DBH; the largest measured was 49 inches DBH. One American Ash measured 32 inches DBH. Another striking feature is the many large fallen Chestnut Trees and stumps throughout the area. A series of rich coves enclose a small stream that empties into the Chattooga River about 0.1 mile downstream of Ellicott Rock. The Ellicott Rock Trail ends at this confluence. You could hike from this point along the stream up to the more level old growth coves but this quarter-mile stretch is quite difficult; steep, poor footing, extremely thick vegetation. The cove is most easily accessed by a spur trail off the Ellicott Rock Trail. This trail is quite vague in parts. While the Ellicott Rock Trail was drawn from GPS tracks the DuMond Cove Trail, red dots on the page 14 map, is only an approximation. The trailhead junction was found blocked by a pile of limbs in 2011. Hike from Bull Pen Road about 2.9 miles and look for the blocked trail on the right. N35 00.095 W83 07.300 is the approximate DuMond Cove trailhead location. It isn't yet known if the Woolly Adelgid has killed these large Hemlocks.



*Spoon Auger Falls.*

## Burrells Ford to Ridley Fields, Section 0 *map page 18*

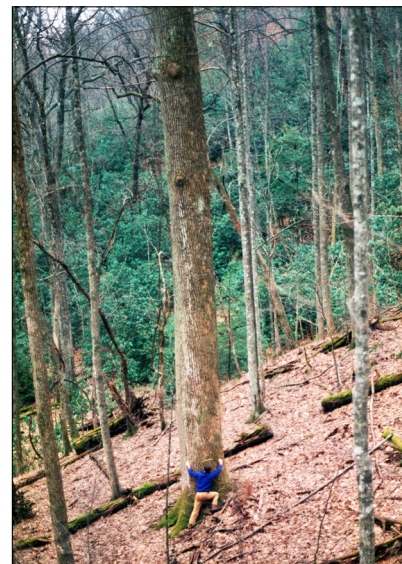
This is Section 0 (zero) of the Chattooga River. It is paralleled, river left, by the Chattooga River Trail. The trail is well maintained, easy walking with switchbacks that avoid very steep places as it follows the ridges and coves. There are occasional scenic stretches near the river. Trail distance from Burrells Ford to Ridley Fields is about 12.3 miles. The trail portion from Burrells Ford down to Lick Log Creek is named the Chattooga River Trail and the Foothills Trail. Lick Log Creek down to Ridley Fields is the Chattooga River Trail and the Bartram Trail. See *Our Nationally Recognized Trails*, page 68.

## Burrells Ford Road *maps page 18, 68*

Burrells Ford Road is a 10 mile long Forest Service Road that goes, east to west, from Highway 107 in South Carolina, crosses the Chattooga River at Burrells Ford, then on to Highway 28 in Georgia just north of the Chattooga River bridge. The South Carolina portion of the road is FS 708, about 3 miles long and is partially paved. The Georgia portion is FS 646, about 7 miles long and unpaved. South Carolina end of Burrells Ford Road. From the Highway 28 and Highway 107 intersection north of Walhalla go north on 107 about 10.5 miles and turn left onto Burrells Ford Road FS 708. It is easy to miss this road, often missing a road sign. Driving north on Highway 107 you will pass Cherry Hill Recreation Area, big sign, then Moody Springs, a little rock-walled pull-out on the left. Burrells Ford Road is the next paved road on the left, about 1.3 miles. Georgia end of Burrells Ford Road. Drive 0.4 miles north of the Highway 28 bridge, Burrells Ford Road on the right. The entire area along this road is excellent for wildflowers.

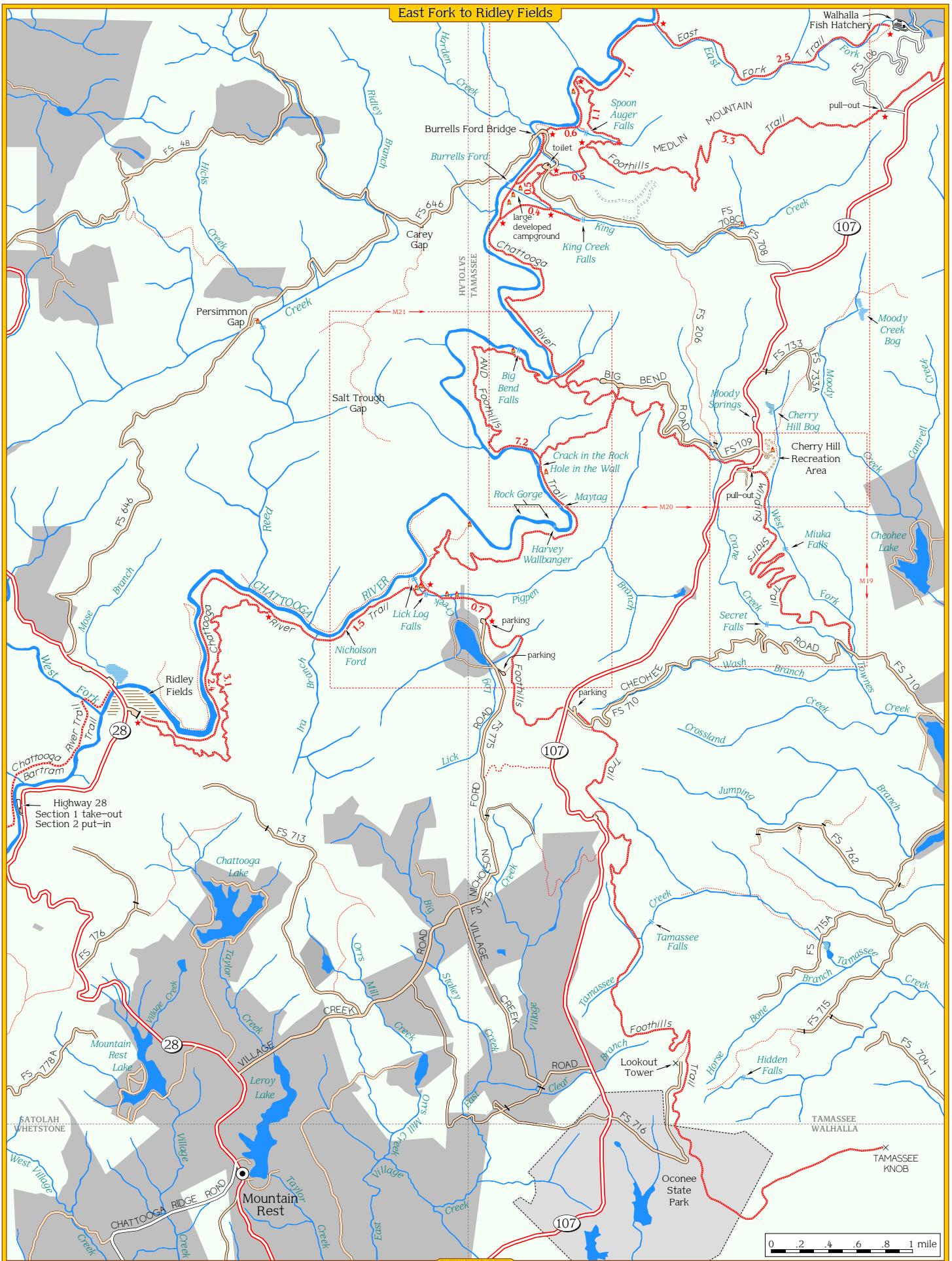
## Burrells Ford *maps page 18, 68*

(N34 58.470 W83 06.963). This is the site of an old ford across the upper Chattooga River. Now there is a bridge and a large developed campground along the river. The old ford and campground is actually about 0.4 miles downstream of the bridge. This is a great area for fishermen, hikers and wildflower enthusiasts. There is a very large, well developed and popular campground with a chemical toilet at the parking lot. King Creek flows through the campground to its confluence with the river. Very rarely is this area without campers and fishermen. Boaters are now allowed on this section of the river at high water levels. This is the beginning of the Chattooga River Section 0 (zero).



*Botanist Dr. Chas Zartman measuring an American Ash at DuMond Cove.*

East Fork to Ridley Fields



## Big Bend Falls maps page 18, 21

(N34 57.188 W83 07.175). This is said to be the largest single drop on the Chattooga River, about 30 feet. To get a complete photograph you will need to go downstream below the falls and cross the river onto the Georgia bank. From the Highway 28 and Highway 107 intersection north of Walhalla go north on 107 about 9.0 miles. The Cherry Hill Recreation Area will be on the right, Big Bend Road, FS 709, on the left. Turn left onto Big Bend Road and park at the end of the road. The hike from here to Big Bend Falls is about 1.2 miles if you follow the trail straight down the ridge from the end of the road. Attempts were made to eliminate this shortcut but because it is an older more direct and well established route it has been restored. The switchback avoids some of the steep places in the trail and adds about 0.3 miles to the Big Bend Falls hike; total one way about 1.5 miles. Study maps on pages 18 and 21 to understand these trails. Many people prefer the downriver hike from the Burrells Ford campground. This is a scenic and longer but quite easy hike with very few steep places, about 3.2 miles one way. At the Burrells Ford campground find the Foothills Trail/Chattooga River Trail and hike downriver. The King Creek Falls trail from the parking lot bypasses the camping area. *See King Creek next.*

## King Creek Falls, King Creek\* map page 18

(N34 57.967 W83 06.682). King Creek Falls is a seventy foot waterfall near the Burrells Ford campground. Very near the entrance to the campground parking lot a trail leads off to the left. There is a sign at the trailhead. An easy walk to the falls of about 0.7 miles. Once you cross the bridge over King Creek turn left and follow the trail upstream to the falls. The trail to the right takes you down to the Chattooga River Trail. Some of our rarest plants are in the King Creek watershed, including two rare orchids; *Isotria medioloides*, Small Whorled Pogonia and *Isotria verticellata*, Large Whorled Pogonia.

## Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall maps page 18, 20

(N34 56.476 W83 06.949). Yes, this spot on the river actually has the unwieldy name “Crack in the Rock and Hole in the Wall”. I have taken it upon myself to rename this place. I’ve removed the “and” because it makes it sound as if this is two separate places. It is easily reached by hiking from Big Bend Road. See Big Bend Falls, *above*, for directions to Big Bend Road. Drive to the end of Big Bend Road and turn around. You will notice that you have driven past a wide place in the road less than 500 feet from the end of the road. Park at this wide place and look for the trailhead on the south side of the road. You’ll see a tank trap with a little shortcut around the left side. This trail becomes more well defined as you travel downward. It shortly intersects with an old logging road/trail – go straight. The trail is all downhill but quite easy, about 0.9 miles to the river where it intersects the Chattooga River Trail. Go downriver a few yards to a large sandy beach area just below Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall. You can also hike to Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall from the Nicholson Ford area. Park at the end of Nicholson Ford Road and follow the trail upriver about 3.4 miles. This is an easy hike but care must be taken to stay on the Chattooga River Trail/Foothills Trail.

## Rock Gorge maps page 18, 21

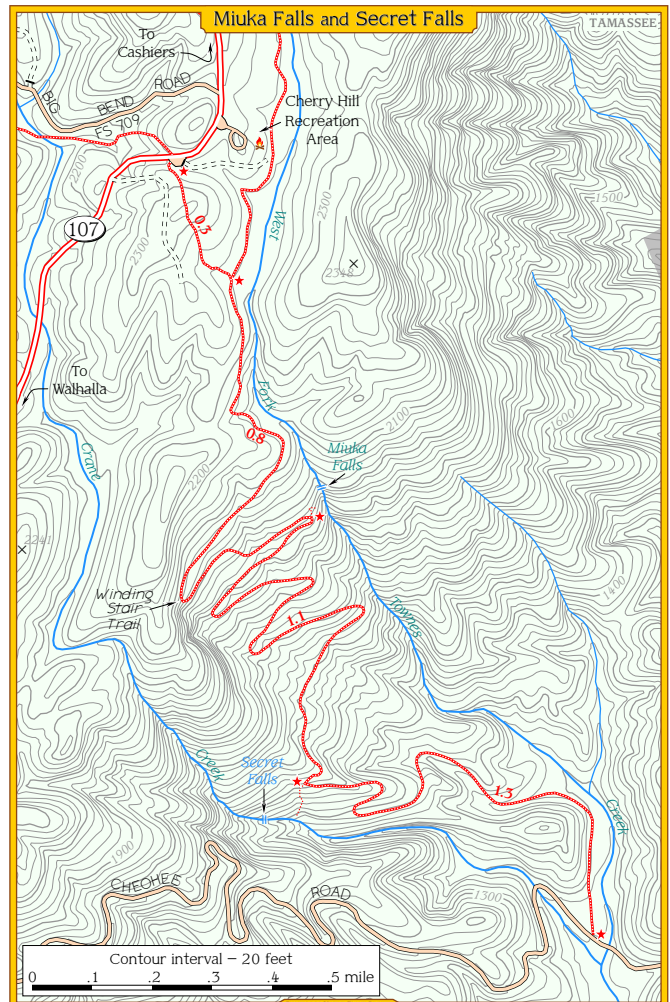
(N34 56.133 W83 06.954). The Rock Gorge is a rugged 0.3 mile stretch of river about 0.7 miles downstream of Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall. It is a bushwhack with absolutely no trails. Much of the hike within the gorge is wading and the best route is on the Georgia side of the river. The lower the water level, the easier the hike. A level below 1.5 feet ([Highway 76 water level gage](#)) is recommended for a safe hike. To get to the upper end of the gorge hike the Chattooga River Trail downstream from Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall about 0.4 miles and wade across; approximate location N34 56.203 W83 06.794, about 100 yards or more downstream of Maytag Rapid. The hike upstream from the Lick Log Creek area is a lengthy hike of about 1.7 miles in the river or on fisherman’s trails.

## Cherry Hill Bog\* map page 18

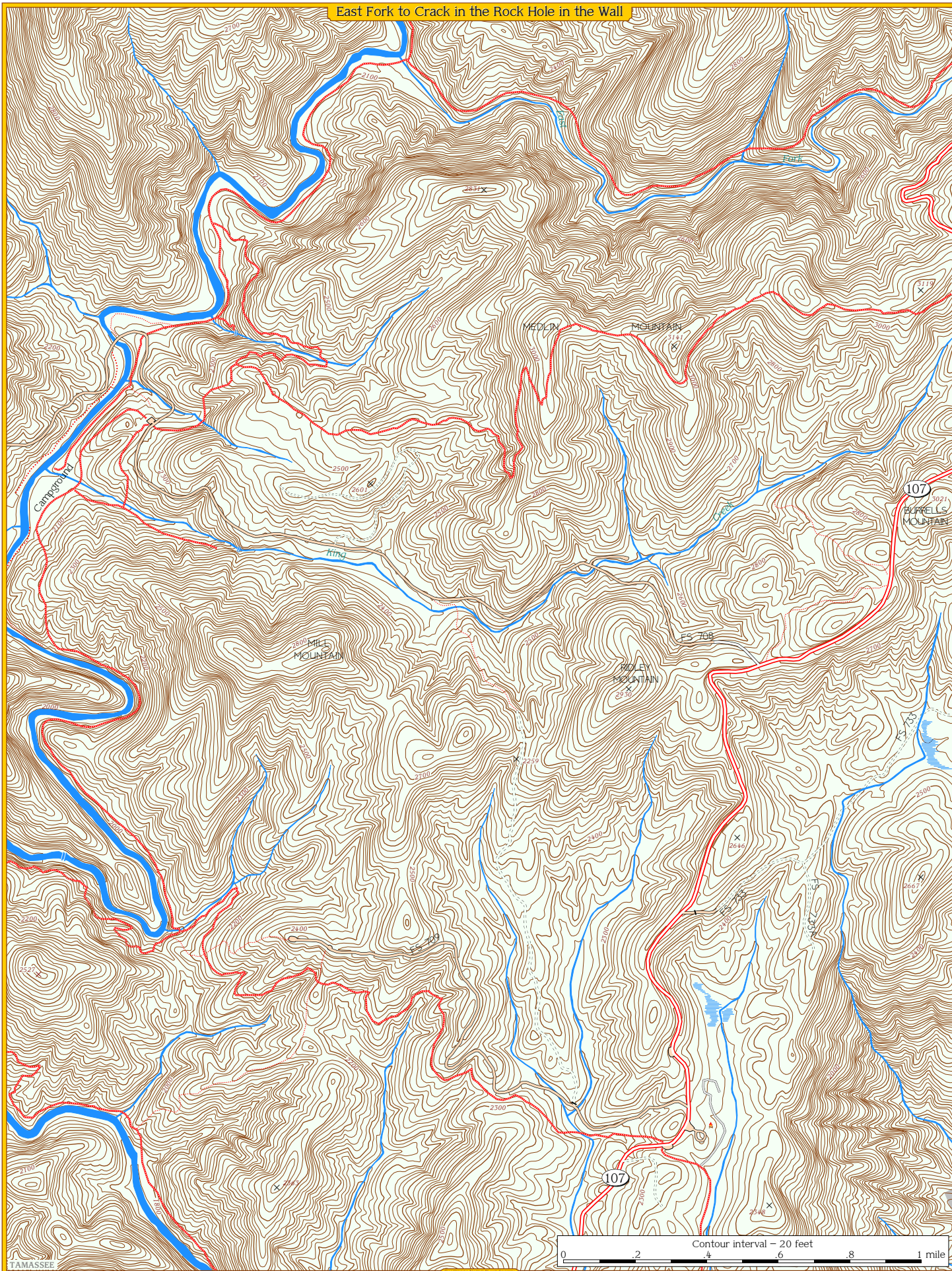
(N34 56.754 W83 05.207). This small bog is just north of the Cherry Hill Recreation Area. It is most easily reached by hiking south from Forest Service Road 733. From the Highway 28 and Highway 107 intersection north of Walhalla go north on 107. At about 8.9 miles look for a sign, Cherry Hill Recreation Area. FS 733 is another 0.7 miles on your right. Park at the metal barrier and bushwhack down the drainage or the ridge on your right. At about 0.3 miles you will encounter flat boggy areas along the small streams. For a more gradual descent with no bushwhacking hike along the road from the barrier. At about 0.4 miles go to the right along a much deteriorated logging road until you see boggy areas on your right, about 0.9 miles round trip.

## Miuka Falls and Secret Falls maps page 8 D2–3, 18 and right →

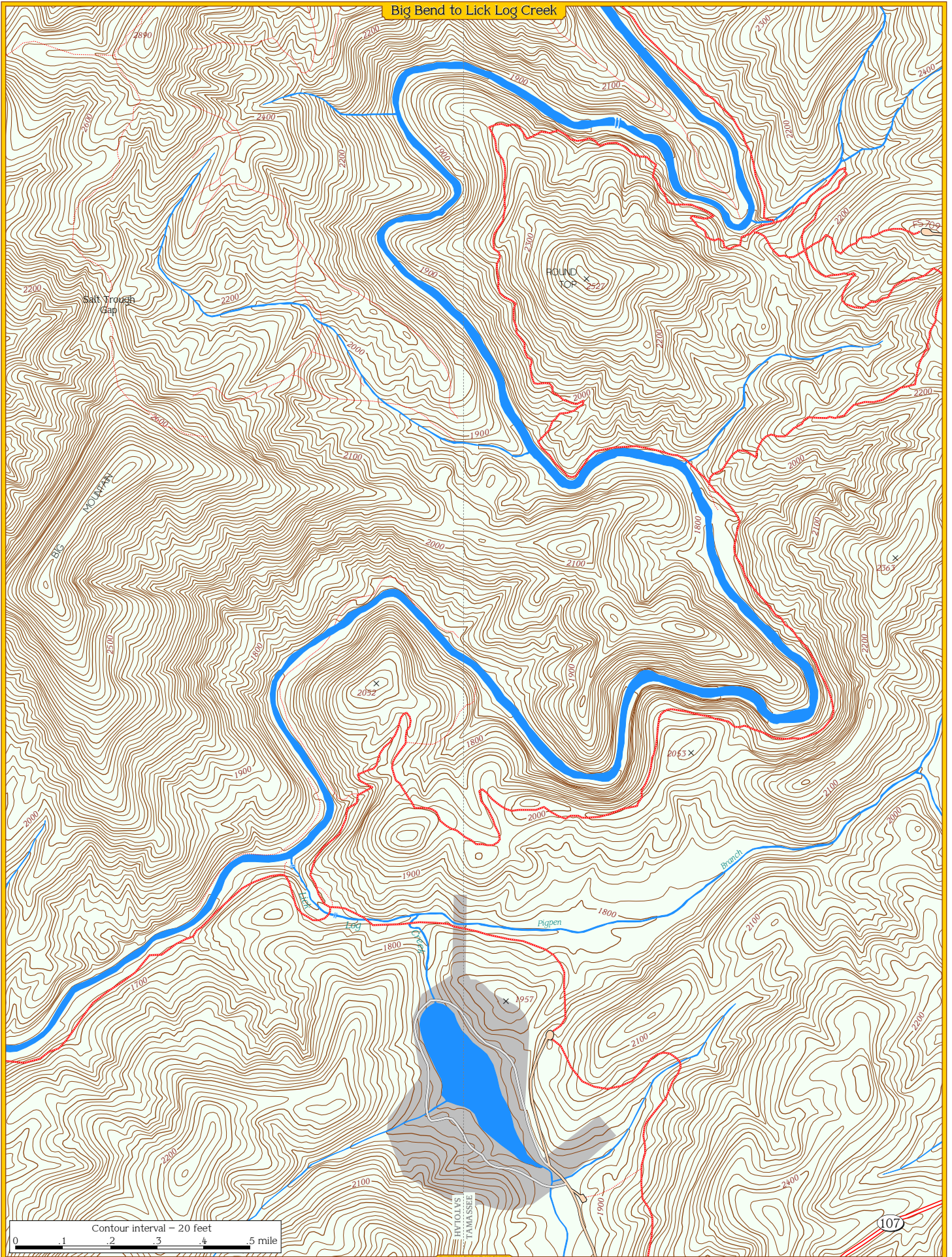
Both these falls are accessed from the Winding Stair Trail that goes south from the Cherry Hill Recreation Area. While the trail itself is very gentle and easy walking, the final drop–down to either falls can be quite difficult. Getting decent pictures of these falls is also quite a chore. Park at the pull–out just south of the Cherry Hill Recreation Area. Notice on the map (right →) that the trailhead is near the extreme right side of the pull–out. Look for a Carsonite sign. The trail starts out in Rhododendron but soon enters open forests. At 0.3 miles the trail from Cherry Hill comes in on the left. Hike another 0.8 miles to the Miuka Falls access trail at the end of one of the long switchbacks; no signage but a large rock on the left. You’ll hear the falls and possibly see them if the foliage isn’t in full leaf. You will notice several vague scoot–down trails to the stream; take your pick. Secret Falls is 1.1 miles further down the trail, still easy hiking. At a sharp left turn you will notice a trail going right and steeply downward to the falls.



East Fork to Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall



Big Bend to Lick Log Creek



Contour interval - 20 feet  
0 .1 .2 .3 .4 .5 mile

HINDOLAS  
TAMMASEE

107

## Sloan Bridge Falls maps page 8 D2 and right →

(N34 59.992 W83 03.355). This waterfall is on the East Fork Chattooga River. Hike about 0.5 miles south on the Foothills Trail from the Sloan Bridge parking area. There are numerous falls along the river in this area but this is the only one that has a clear trail that drops down from the main trail. Once you pass the campsite/fire ring look for the trail on your right. It is very short, very steep and slippery when wet but if you take your time and get a good hand hold on the many strong tree roots the descent is quite easy. The Foothills Trail from Sloan Bridge down to Fish Hatchery Road is 3.3 miles, very easy walking, nothing steep. The Sloan Bridge parking area is about 2.5 miles north of the Fish Hatchery entrance or only 0.2 miles north of the Wigington Road intersection on Highway 107. There is a toilet and several picnic tables. The Foothills Trail trailhead is near the highway on the far left of the parking area.

## Moody Creek Bog\* map page 18

(N34 57.431 W83 04.557). This bog is just outside the Chattooga watershed but is a very worthwhile hike for the botanist. It is only about 0.9 miles northeast of Cherry Hill Bog and both bogs can be visited on the same hike. See *Cherry Hill Bog* previous page. Go north on highway 107 about 0.7 miles beyond the Cherry Hill Recreation Area entrance. FS 733 (N34 57.068 W83 05.304) will be on the right. Park at the metal barrier (do not block the road) and hike the road about 0.9 miles to Moody Creek Bog. Like nearby Cherry Hill Bog the wet areas are widely spread in the level areas. Some plants found there;

*Carex stricta*, Tussock Sedge (only known SC occurrence)  
*Dendrolycopodium obscurum*, Common Ground-pine  
*Juncus gymnocarpus*, Naked-fruited Needle Rush  
*Platanthera clavellata*, Small Woodland Orchid

## Lick Log Creek Falls maps page 18, 21

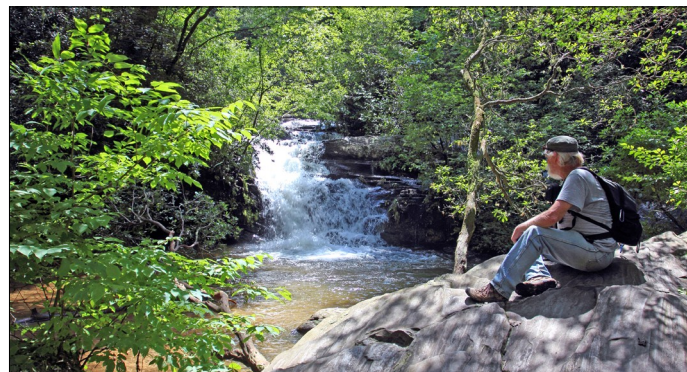
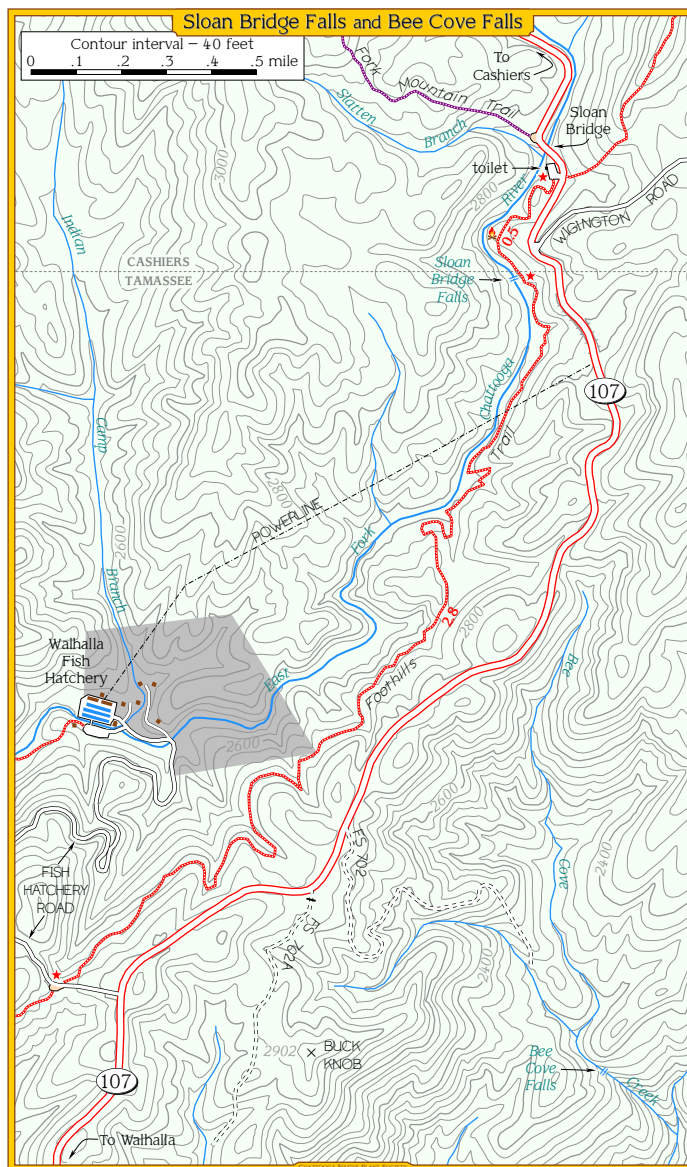
(N34 55.706 W83 07.760). Also known as Pigpen Falls because both these streams join just before the confluence with the Chattooga River. Lick Log Creek Falls is an easy hike of about 0.8 miles from a parking area at the end of Nicholson Ford Road. Approaching the falls a Carsonite sign marks the trail going north and at the falls a footbridge crosses Lick Log Creek taking you downstream on the Chattooga River Trail. It's about 4 miles downstream to Ridley Fields at the Highway 28 Bridge. The trail stays quite close to the river and at 0.2 miles a short spur trail goes down to the Lick Log Creek confluence. At 1.4 miles an alternate upper trail forks to the left. It goes up along the ridges and coves and ends only yards away from the Ridley Fields parking area. Total length of this upper trail is about 3.1 miles. Going north from Lick Log Creek Falls, Burrells Ford is about 8.1 miles. See the *mileage chart on page 70*. To get to the Lick Log Creek area from the Highway 28 and Highway 107 intersection north of Walhalla go north on 107 about 3.3 miles and turn left onto Village Creek Road. Village Creek Road is about 1 mile north of the Oconee State Park entrance. Drive about 1.8 miles and go right onto Nicholson Ford Road. After about 2.3 miles the road will end at a parking area. If you're in the Long Creek area take Chattooga Ridge Road and turn left onto Highway 28. Drive 0.7 miles and turn right onto Village Creek Road. Drive 2.1 miles and turn left onto Nicholson Ford Road.

## Ridley Fields, Highway 28 Bridge maps page 18, 23, 32

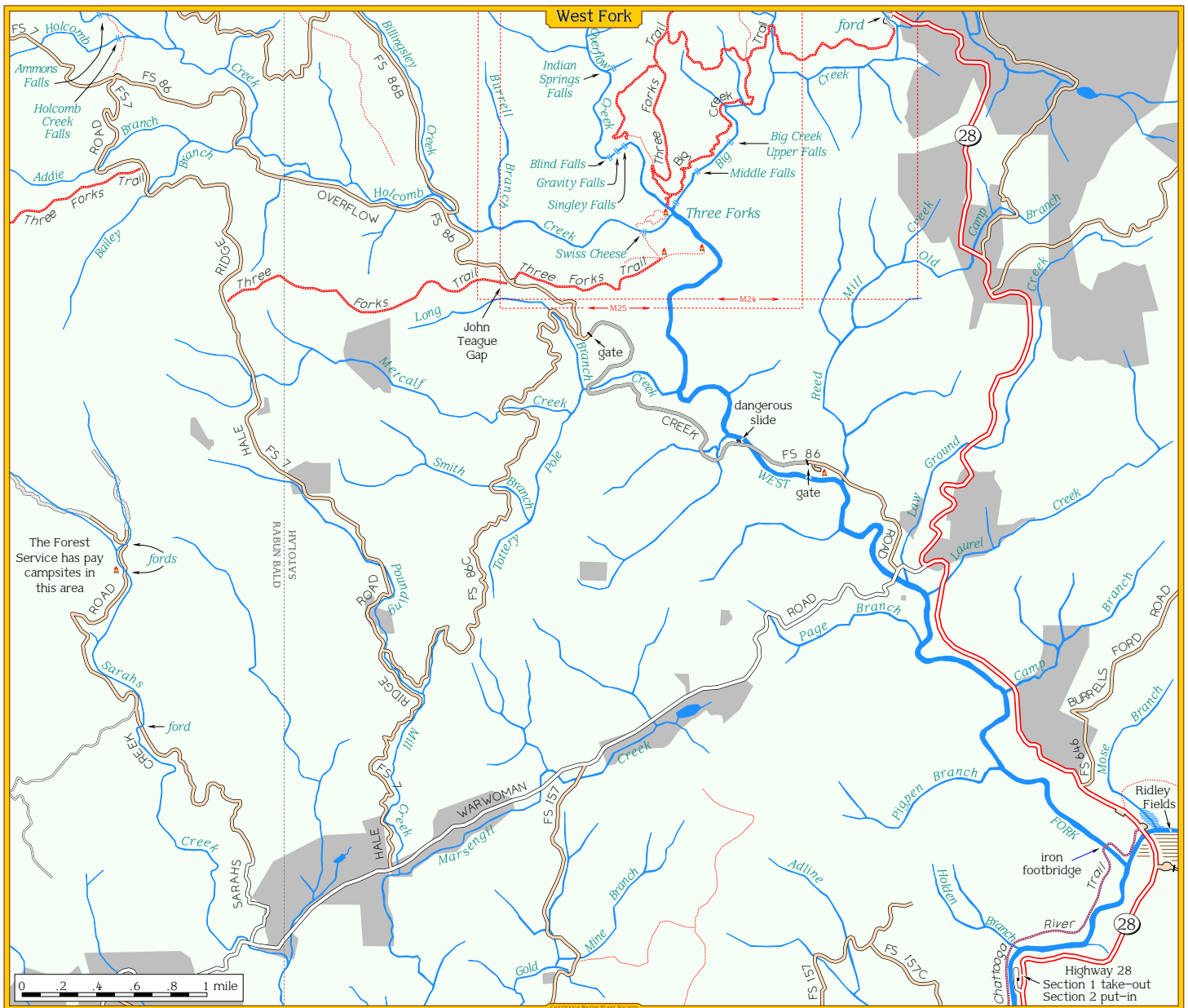
(N34 55.158 W83 10.131). The Highway 28 Chattooga River bridge, also known as Russell Bridge can be a busy place at times. It is a prime trout fishing and hiking area. The Chattooga River/Bartram Trail crosses the Highway 28 bridge as it goes north from the Georgia side of the river into South Carolina. There are parking areas on both sides of the river. Large flat areas on the South Carolina side are called Ridley Fields. A 20 acre field near the South Carolina parking area is often planted in corn. Despite this the area is very good for wildflowers, butterflies and dragonflies. There are information boards and signs at both parking areas.

## West Fork Chattooga River maps page 23, 24, 26, 33

(N34 55.015 W83 10.222). The West Fork is part of the Wild and Scenic River System and is referred to as Section 1. It begins at **Three Forks** (58.085 W83 12.833) where three major streams, Holcomb Creek, Overflow Creek and Big Creek, come together and flow into the Chattooga River about 0.2 miles downstream of the Highway 28 bridge; a total length of about 5.8 river miles. Boaters usually put in at an Overflow Creek campground a short distance upstream of the Warwoman Road bridge. This Section 1 float is about 4 river miles. The last 1.2 miles is on Section 2 of the main river from the West Fork confluence down to the Highway 28 take-out.



Lick Log Creek Falls

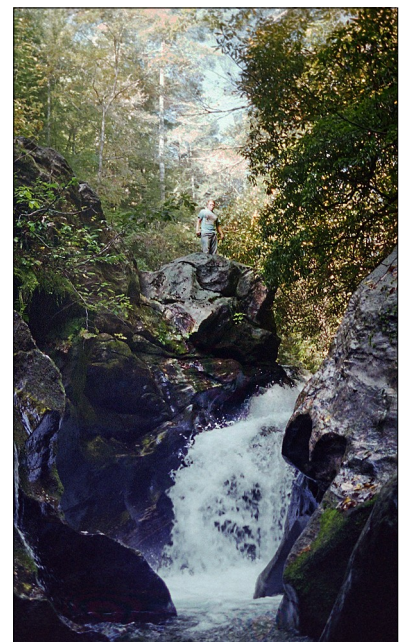


**Three Forks Hikes** maps page 23, 24, 25, 26

There are two frequently used trails to the Three Forks confluence.

**Three Forks Trail at John Teague Gap** (N34 57.735 W83 13.727). The John Teague Gap trailhead is on Overflow Creek Road about 4 miles going north from Warwoman Road. However, because a section of Overflow Creek Road is now closed (see map above) you must drive about 3.1 miles south from the Hale Ridge Road intersection. See *Hale Ridge Road Map*, page 26. Look for a small pull-out on the left with an engraved boulder marking the trailhead. The trail is fairly level for about 0.9 miles. Here a trail goes sharply left down a deeply shaded drainage. Take this left fork and hike along the drainage until you come to Holcomb Creek, less than 0.2 miles. This section of Holcomb Creek runs gently through a beautiful wooded cove then suddenly drops down into an impressive, almost hidden, gorge known as **Swiss Cheese** (N34 57.989 W83 12.967). Take care checking this out. It is quite scary just looking down into this little gorge. Cross the creek here and, bearing to the right, follow any of the ill-defined trails that go down the steep ridge to Three Forks. You'll find a nice campsite near the Holcomb Creek confluence.

**Big Creek Trail.** This trail leads to Three Forks from Highway 28 near the Satolah community. It is commonly referred to as the Three Forks Trail. However, the actual Three Forks Trail in this area originates in a private community and goes south to Three Forks. Big Creek Trail is a more appropriate name since it roughly parallels Big Creek for its entire length, about 2.8 miles. From the Warwoman Road and Highway 28 junction drive north about 4 miles to the Satolah Community and look for the Big Creek bridge. Shortly after crossing Big Creek, less than 0.1 mile, there is a pull-out at a lower elevation on the left, N34 59.020 W83 11.600. Driving south from Highlands on Highway 28 the pull-out is on the right about 1.4 miles south of the NC/GA state line. You can park here or ford the small stream on an old Forest Service road (FS 650).

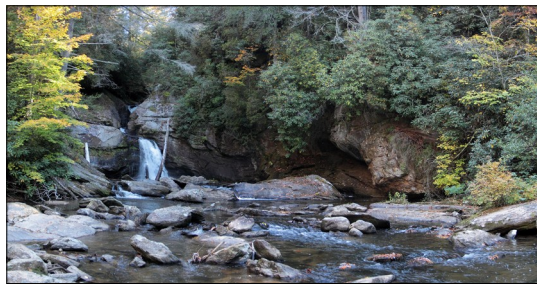


Swiss Cheese

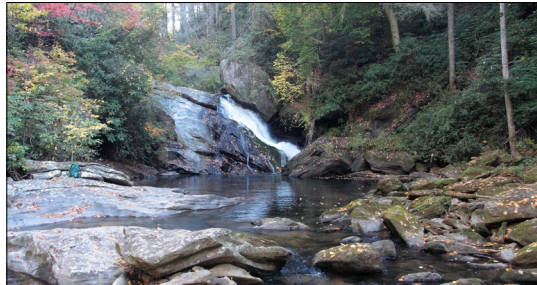
If you ford the stream drive only a short distance to a small pull-out on the right. Parking isn't going to get any better further down this road. The old road quickly disintegrates into a trail. At about 1.3 miles the trail forks. The right fork continues on to join the Three Forks Trail. This connector trail and the Three Forks Trail are wider, more well defined, not as steep and easier hiking than the Big Creek Trail. Hiking distance about 0.6 miles longer than the Big Creek Trail. To stay on the Big Creek Trail go left (straight). At about 0.7 miles below the fork you will find a trail that goes left and downward to the Big Creek Upper Falls, N34 58.389 W83 12.528. These little spur trails that drop down to the falls are easily missed. Another 0.3 miles down to Big Creek Middle Falls, N34 58.265 W83 12.673. Another 0.5 miles and the trail ends at Three Forks. Total one way hike of about 2.8 miles, all downhill. At Three Forks you'll find the last falls on Big Creek, a series of small drops, will be on your left. Looking downstream from this spot you can see Holcomb Creek issuing from between the rocks and falling 6 feet or so directly into Overflow Creek, which has now become the West Fork of the Chattooga River. Hiking back to the Highway 28 trailhead is easier if you take the Three Forks Trail straight up the ridge then go right to the top portion of Big Creek Trail.

**Singley Falls** *maps page 23, 24, 25, 26*

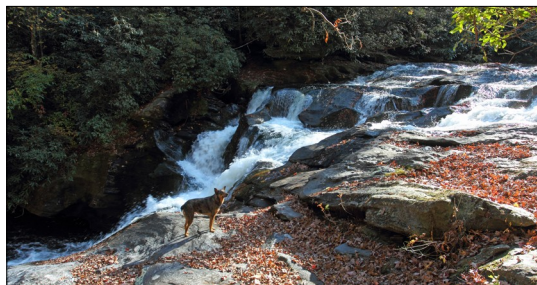
(N34 58.382 W83 13.090). Singley falls is a rewarding side trip when on a Three Forks hike from Highway 28. From the parking area at Highway 28 it is about a 3 mile hike one way. Hike the Big Creek Trail to the first fork, about 1.3 miles, and go right. After another 0.8 miles there is another junction. The trail to your right goes up the ridge to private property, go left down the ridge. After a short hike of about 0.3 miles you'll find a wide spot in the trail and a trail going right. This trail, Singley Falls Trail, while all downhill, is quite easy, about 0.7 miles. There are supposed to be vague trails in the Singley Falls area that go further upstream to other waterfalls; Gravity Falls and Blind Falls. This is a great area for wildflowers and scenic views of Overflow Creek. Boaters run this stream at high water levels which is often accompanied by wet and rainy weather but hiking in this area is best (and safest) during dry conditions and periods of low water levels. The Three Forks maps show a trail from Singley Falls going downstream to the Three Forks Trail. This trail was checked in 2012 and found to be very vague or nonexistent although it was evident that a trail was there at one time.



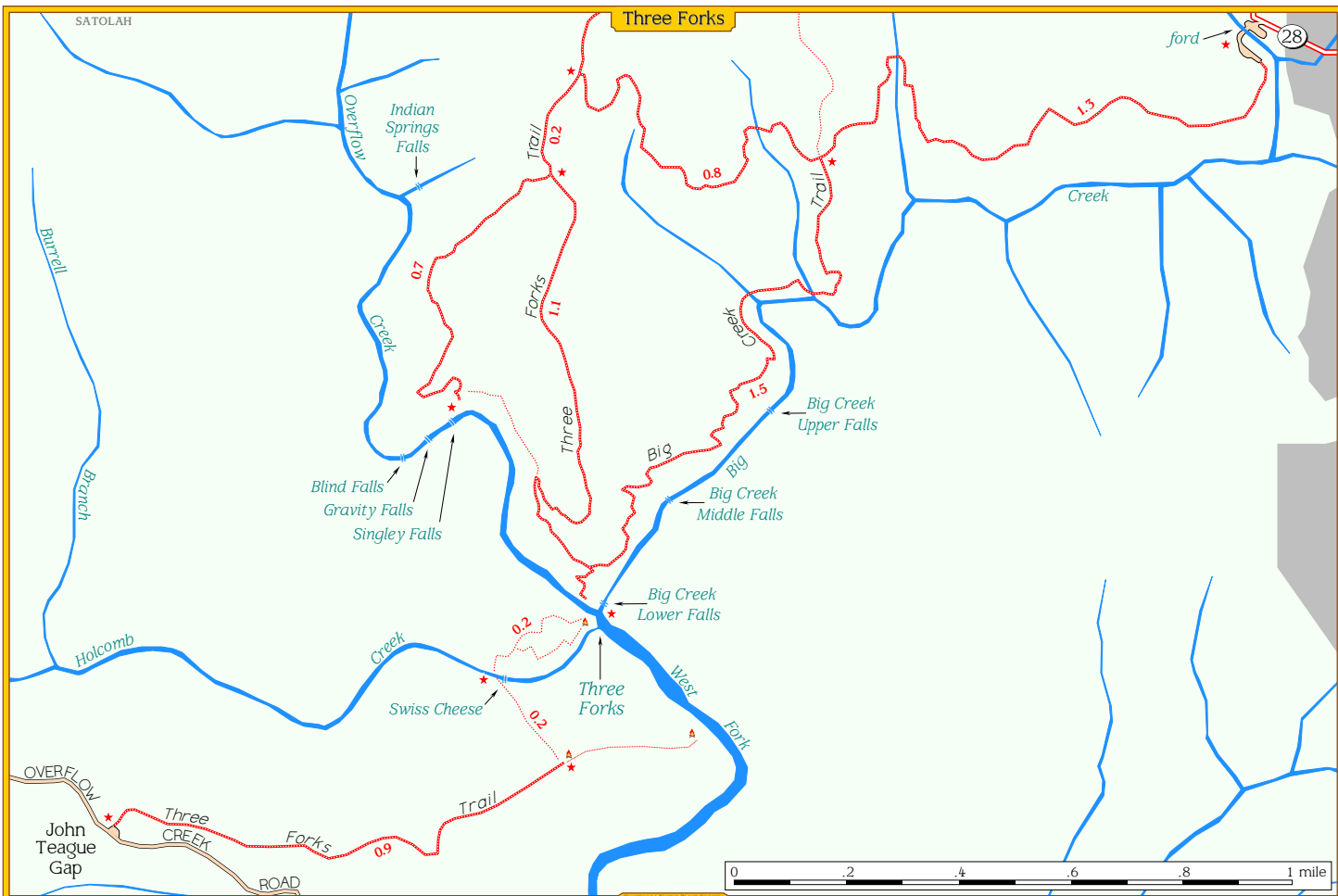
*Big Creek Upper Falls*



*Big Creek Middle Falls*



*Singley Falls at normal water level*



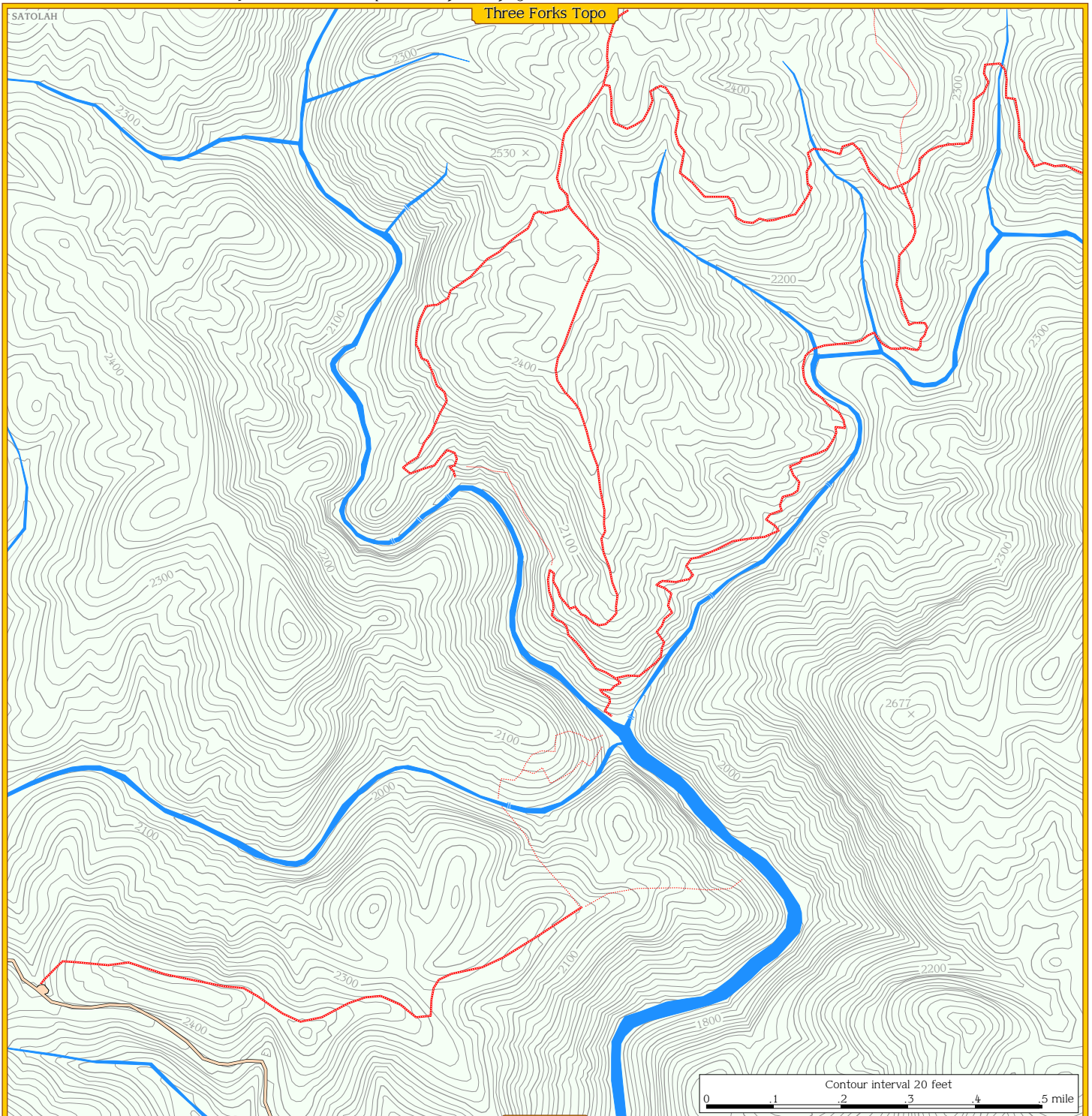


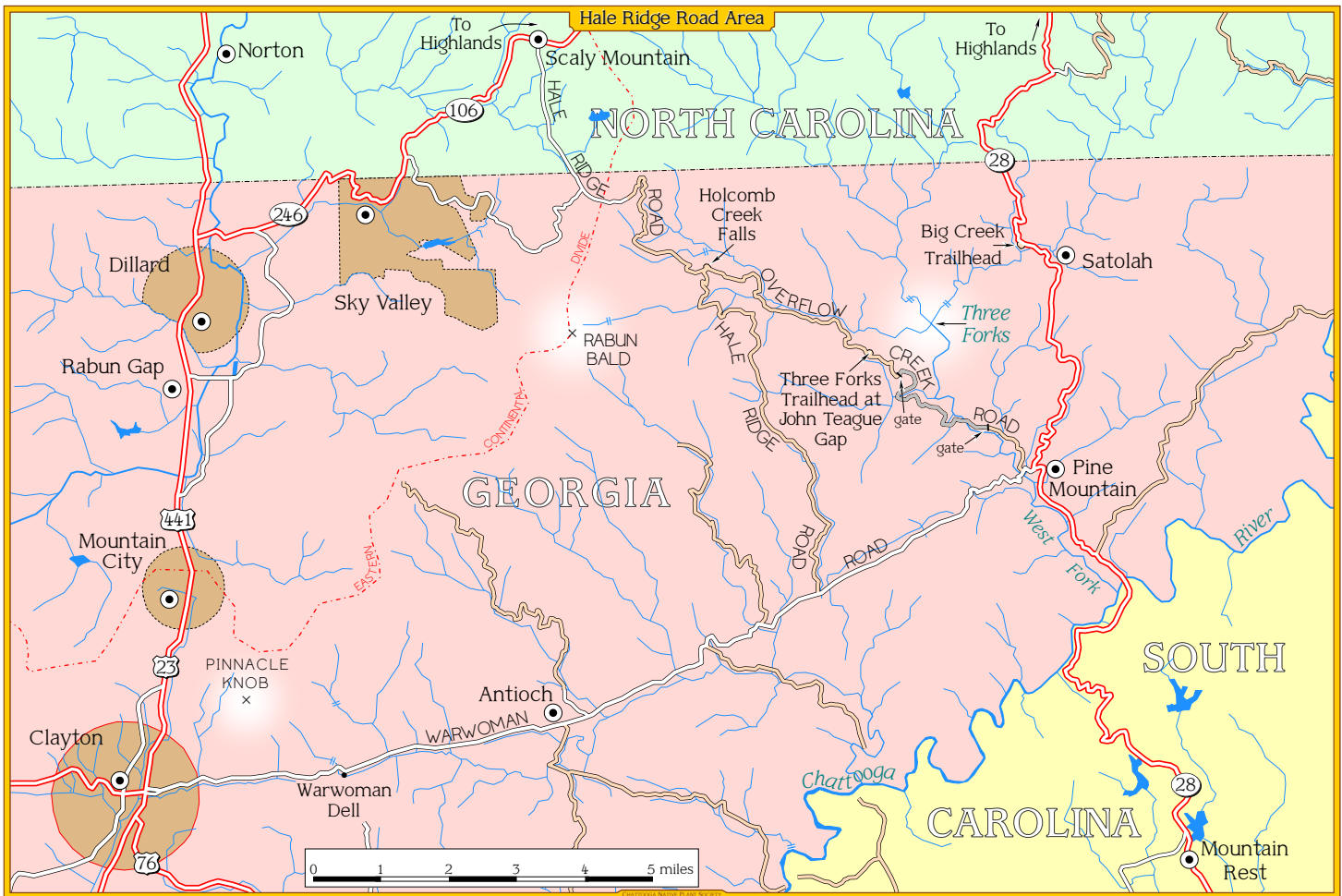
## Holcomb Creek Falls and Ammons Creek Falls maps page 26, 30

Holcomb Creek Falls is a scenic 120 foot falls that looks quite different at different water levels. Ammons Creek Falls, also known as Emory Branch Falls has a viewing platform that, unfortunately, is so close to the falls that getting a good picture is impossible. The trailhead to these waterfalls is at the intersection (N34 58.716 W83 15.964) of Hale Ridge Road FS 7 and Overflow Creek Road FS 86. From Warwoman Road turn onto Hale Ridge Road and drive about 6.5 miles to the intersection. There are numerous signs and a pull-out. An engraved stone marks the trailhead. It is about 0.3 miles to the falls, an easy walk. After crossing the small footbridge at Holcomb Creek Falls the trail forks. The left fork loops back up to Hale Ridge Road near the Holcomb Creek bridge, an uphill hike of about 0.6 miles. The right fork goes only a short distance, about 0.2 miles, up to Ammons Creek Falls. These trails aren't well maintained but the hike is only 1 mile round trip. *See map next page.*



Holcomb Creek Falls.





### Rabun Bald Hikes

maps page 29, 30

Five miles west of Thee Forks is Rabun Bald (N34 57.925 W83 18.003). This is the second highest mountain in Georgia and home to some of our rarest plants. Elevation is 4,696 feet with a 13 foot observation platform at the summit. The view from the platform is one of the best in our area. Rabun Bald is visible from numerous points throughout our area. There are several routes that can be taken to get to the summit. See *Bartram Trail*, page 69.

### Beegum Gap

maps page 27, 28, 29, 30, 69

The shortest hike to the Rabun Bald summit is from Beegum Gap and most day-hikers take this route. You'll find Beegum Gap and the trailhead to Rabun Bald at the end of Kelsey Mountain Road. From here you can follow a foot trail (left) or a jeep trail (right). The foot trail is shorter, but both trails are very rewarding wildflower hikes. The foot trail joins Bartram Trail after about 0.3 miles; post with a yellow marker. The foot trail and the jeep trail rejoin at a jeep parking area, about halfway to the summit. Another 20 minutes up the foot trail to the summit. Hike to the summit is 1.6 miles one way, a little longer if you take the jeep trail. For directions to Beegum Gap see map next page.

### Three Forks Trail to Rabun Bald

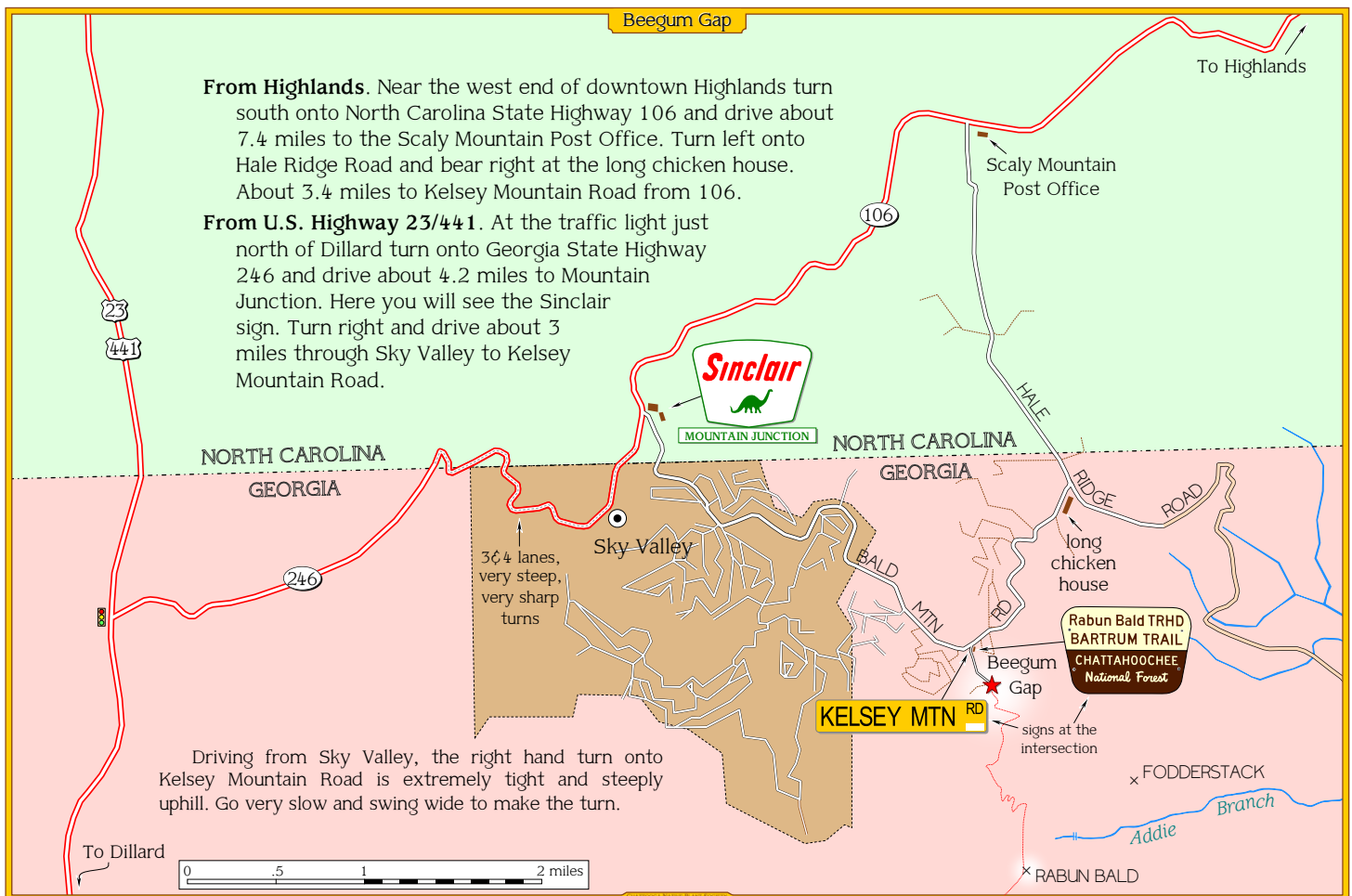
maps page 28, 29, 30

The Three Forks Trail from Hale Ridge Road to the Rabun Bald summit is a 2.8 mile hike. You will pass through a variety of beautiful forests that offer great wildflower opportunities. The Forest Service rates this trail as "most difficult" only because of the very steep places in the last three quarters of a mile to the summit. You may need to take a few rest stops in that section. Most of the trail up to that point is gently inclined. The elevation gain from Hale Ridge Road to the summit is a whopping 2,270 feet. From Highway 441 in Clayton go east on Warwoman Road 10.2 miles and turn left onto Hale Ridge Road FS 7. A sign listing trails marks the intersection. Drive about 5.7 miles to a small parking area on the right. A large hiker's sign → and a smaller Carsonite sign mark the trailhead (N34 58.305 W83 15.816). If you're driving south on Hale Ridge Road the trailhead is 1 mile from the Overflow Creek Road intersection.



Viewing platform at the summit of Rabun Bald.





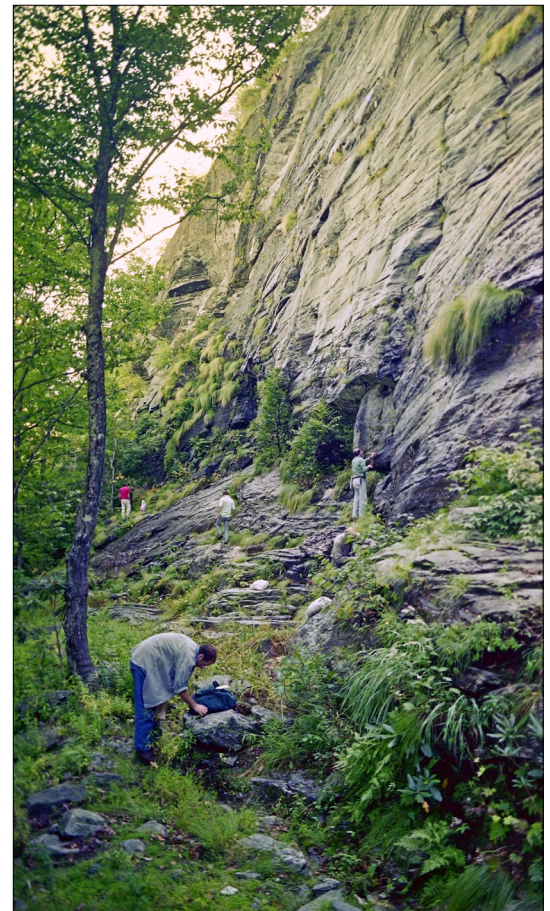
**Northern Cliffs and Boulder Field\*** maps page 28, 29, 30

The maps with GPS tracks are for experienced hikers who want to bushwhack the northern cliffs, Chestnut Ridge, Fodderstack, the boulderfield and/or Addie Branch Falls. For the botanist or naturalist this is a very rewarding hike. While there is nothing really difficult bushwhacking in this area, Rhododendron thickets, steep places and slick rocks can make for slow and tedious progress.

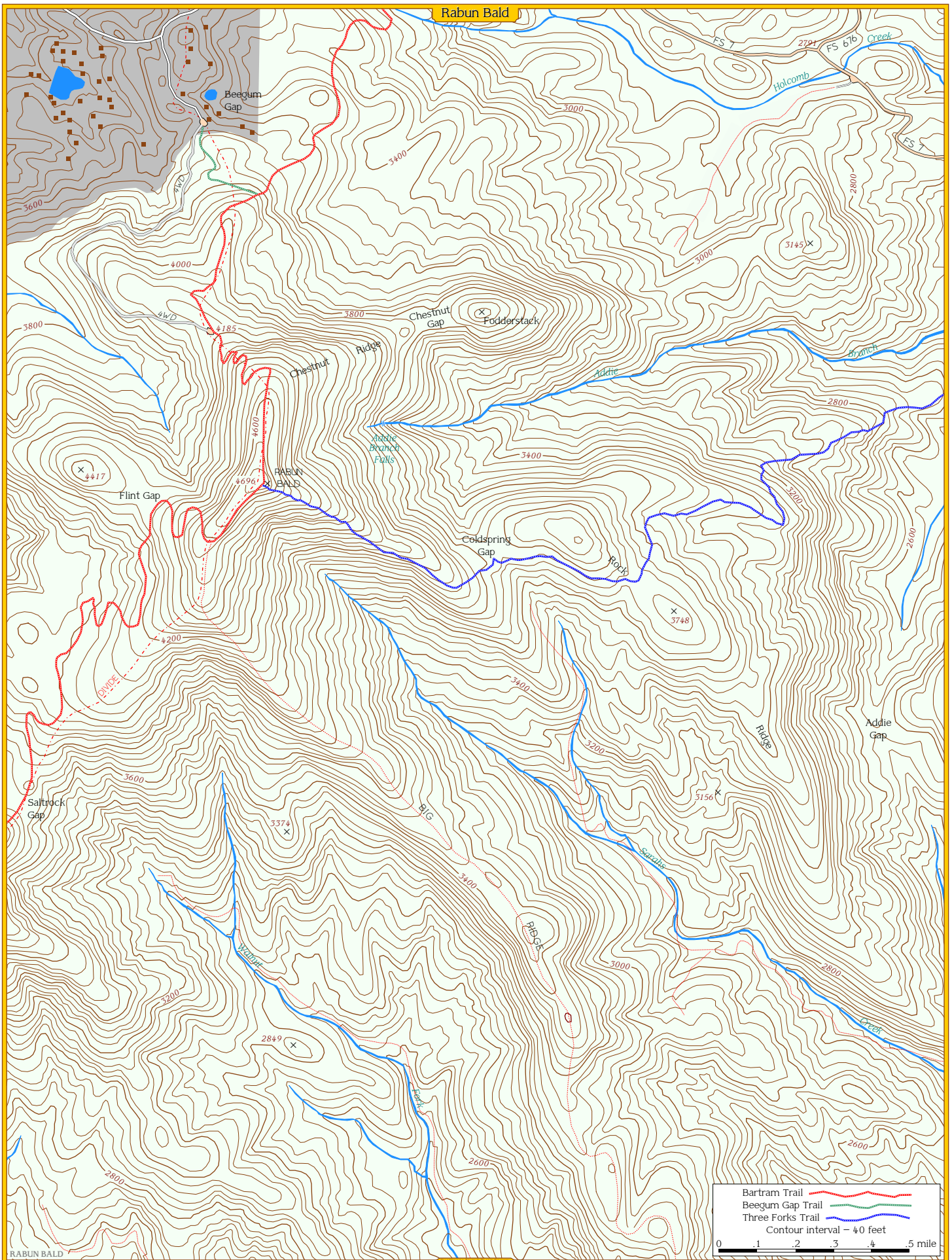
To get to the northern cliffs simply bushwhack eastward from the jeep parking area; the junction of the 4WD trail and the Bartram Trail. After only a few yards you will come to a seepage area with a bath tub; the site of an old moonshine still. From here contour upward and you will soon come to the minor cliffs. There is a path along the base of these cliffs. Skirt along the base of the cliffs until you come to the end of the cliffs. Here you will have to scramble downward through the Rhododendron to continue. At one point you will have to drop sharply downward and follow a rocky, sometimes wet, drainage before you come to the major cliffs. There are several minor cliffs beyond the higher ones, then open woods. This is Chestnut Ridge. Contouring upward you will find a very interesting boulder field. These are huge boulders that have tumbled from the mountain and have come to rest in dense woods. Excellent wildflowers throughout this area. If you go north from here you will find short cliffs running left and right. Go right along the cliffs until the woods transition into Rhododendron. Here you should find a large patch of native Lily of the Valley (*Convallaria majuscula*) and Wood Lily (*Clintonia umbellulatta*). Returning to the trail is quite easy but confusing. The natural tendency is to go south. Keep your trajectory westward and only slightly to the south for the shortest route back to the trail. Very thick Rhododendron here with some traces of trails.

**Addie Branch Falls** maps page 28, 29, 30

The small stream, Addie Branch, originates in a remote area on the east slope of Rabun Bald, flows beneath Hale Ridge Road and joins Bailey Branch. Much of the area is very steep and covered with thick vegetation. There are numerous small rocky seepages in the upper portion. The stream falls over an eighty foot cliff (N34 58.056 W83 17.648), elevation about 3,680 feet, then flows down a steep rock face into a Rhododendron thicket. The area around the falls is a great but difficult place to explore. The falls cliff extends southward as a series of cliffs only 10 or more feet high. About half way up the falls cliff on the north side is a large



Botanists at the Northern Cliffs.



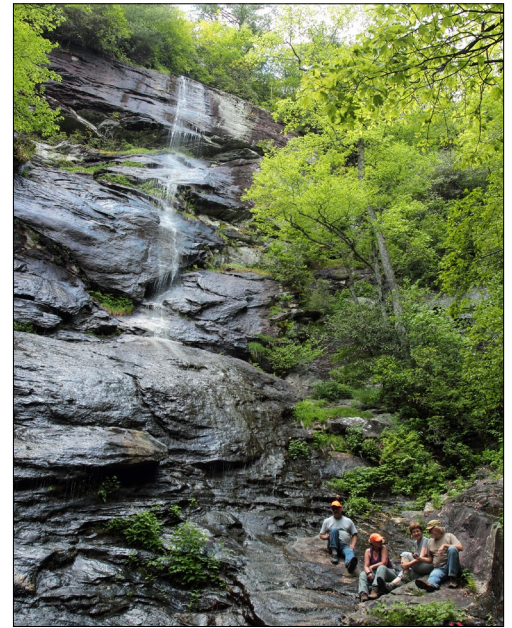
rockhouse with a seepage; well worth taking a look, sometimes has luxuriant growth of Filmy Fern, *Trichomanes boschianum*. The map below and on the previous page have GPS tracks from actual hikes. Keep in mind that these are not trails but when you bushwhack the area these tracks are often the most logical path of least resistance.

**Fodderstack** maps page 28, 29, 30

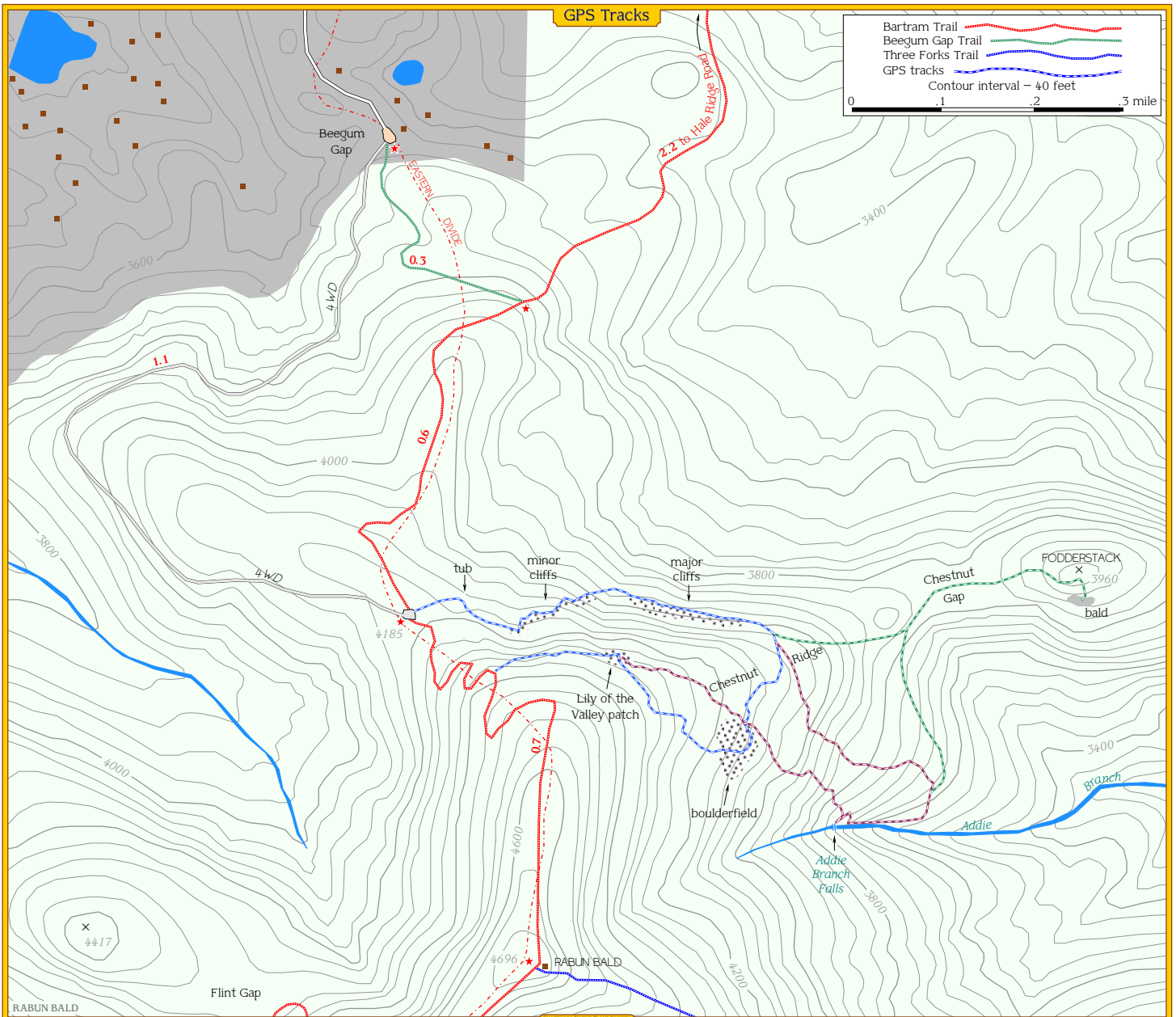
(N34 58.306 W83 17.392). Bushwhacking map below. There are several hills, knobs or small mountains in our area called Fodderstack. This one, elevation 3,960 feet, is just 0.7 miles northeast of Rabun Bald. From the Rabun Bald platform look northeast; it is the nearby small mount with several small exposed rock outcroppings. After hiking the Northern Cliffs bushwhack down Chestnut Ridge. The ridge, Chestnut Gap and the western slope of Fodderstack are all in fairly open woods. A few yards to the southwest of the summit you will find the uppermost rock face that is visible from the Rabun Bald platform. Addie Branch Falls can be seen from this spot. There are also very interesting sheltered cliffs on the northeast side of Fodderstack. These are most easily reached by hiking from Hale Ridge Road. Although there is no trail the hike is rather simple.

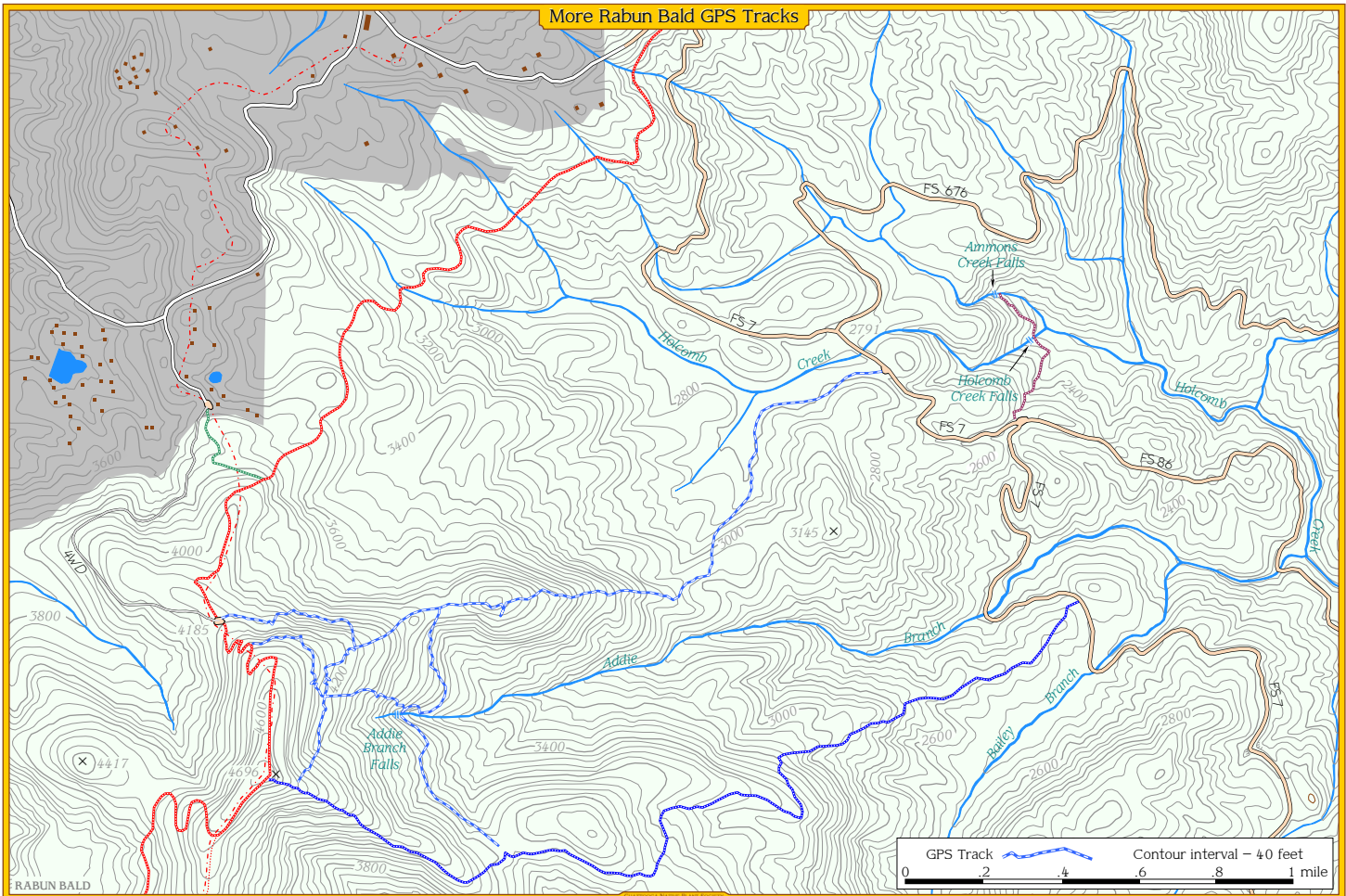
**Coldspring Gap\*** maps page 28, 29, 30

(N34 57.775 W83 17.355). From the summit of Rabun Bald hike about 0.7 miles east on the Three Forks Trail. The trail goes steeply downward but soon levels out. This level place, a saddle, is called Coldspring Gap. A favorite camping area, several fire rings. There is a seepage area on the south side of the saddle only yards from the campsite, great for wildflowers. *Cardamine clematitis*, Mountain Bitter Cress, a very rare high elevation species, was once recorded here but subsequent searches failed to find it. Some say that is the ephemeral nature of that species.



Hikers at Addie Branch Falls.





**Rabun Bald Plant List**

For the wildflower enthusiast, the seasoned botanist or bryologist, Rabun Bald is one of our best hikes. Each cove can have its own personality and the cliff areas have a rich and varied assortment of mosses and lichens. The casual hiker should try the jeep trail from Beegum Gap. It is especially good in early to mid May. You can hike up one trail and back down the other. A bushwhack around the cliffs to the boulderfield is actually quite easy and a wondrous hike for anyone interested in nature. A hike to the summit is rewarding any time of the year. Many of the species listed below are very rare in our area and some are found nowhere else in Georgia. Some species like Monkshood and Grass of Parnassus are common on and around nearby mountains but rare on Rabun Bald. Some species are disputed or said to be in doubt but all the species listed below have been confirmed at one time or another by researchers.



*Saxifraga michauxii*, Michaux's Saxifrage

- Acer pensylvanicum*, Striped Maple
- Acer spicatum*, Mountain Maple
- Aconitum uncinatum*, Monkshood
- Actaea pachypoda*, Bane Berry, Doll's Eyes
- Ageratina altissima roanensis*, Appalachian White Snake Root
- Amelanchier arborea arborea*, Downy June Berry
- Amianthium muscaetoxicum*, Fly Poison
- Amphicarpaea bracteata*, Hog Peanut
- Anemone quinquefolia*, Wood Anemone
- Angelica triquinata*, Mountain Angelica
- Apocynum androsaefolium*, Spreading Dogbane
- Aralia nudicaulis*, Wild Sarsaparilla
- Aralia racemosa*, Spikenard
- Arisaema triphyllum*, Jack-in-the-pulpit
- Aronia arbutifolia*, Red Choke Berry
- Asclepias exaltata*, Mountain Milk Weed
- Asplenium montanum*, Mountain Spleenwort
- Aster retroflexus*, Curtis' Aster
- Athyrium asplenoides*, Southern Lady Fern

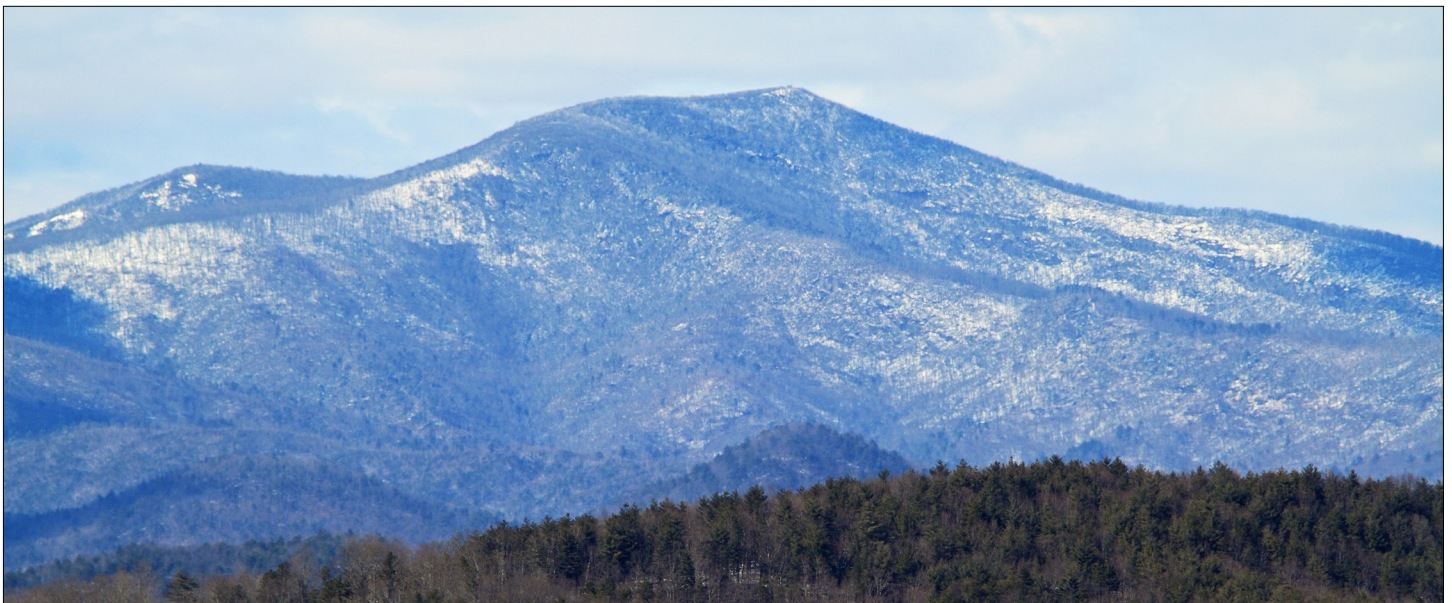
- Betula allegheniensis*, Yellow Birch
- Botrychium virginiana*, Rattlesnake Fern
- Campanula divaricata*, Southern Harebell
- Cardamine clematitidis*, Mountain Bitter Cress
- Cardamine flagellifera*, Blue Ridge Bitter Cress
- Carex biltmoreana*, Biltmore Sedge
- Carex misera*, Wretched Sedge
- Castanea dentata*, American Chestnut
- Chelone glabra*, White Turtlehead
- Cimicifuga americana*, Mountain Bugbane
- Cirsium altissimus*, Tall Thistle
- Clethra acuminata*, Cinnamon Clethra
- Clintonia umbellulatta*, Speckled Wood Lily
- Collinsonia canadensis*, Horse Balm
- Conopopholis americana*, Squaw Root
- Convallaria montana*, Lily of the Valley
- Corydalis sempervirens*, Pale Corydalis
- Cypripedium acuale*, Pink Lady's Slipper
- Cypripedium parviflorum*, Yellow Lady's Slipper
- Dennstaedtia punctilobula*, Hay-scented Fern

- Deschampsia flexuosa*, Common Hair Grass
- Diervilla sessifolia*, Bush Honeysuckle
- Dioscorea quaternata*, Wild Yam
- Diphylleia cymosa*, Umbrella Leaf
- Dryopteris intermedia*, Intermediate Fern
- Dryopteris marginalis*, Marginal Fern
- Epigaea repens*, Trailing Arbutus
- Galax urceolata*, Galax
- Galinsoga quadriradiata*, Common Peruvian Daisy
- Goodyera pubescens*, Downy Rattlesnake Plantain
- Gymnoderma lineare*, Rock Gnome Lichen
- Hamamelis virginiana*, Witch Hazel
- Helianthus divaricatus*, Woodland Sun Flower
- Heuchera parviflora*, Small-flowered Alum Root
- Heuchera villosa*, Hairy Alum Root
- Houstonia serpyllifolia*, Thyme-leaved Bluet
- Huperzia appressa*, Appalachian Club Moss
- Huperzia lucidula*, Shining Club Moss
- Huperzia porophila*, Rock Club Moss
- Hydrangea arborescens*, Wild Hydrangea

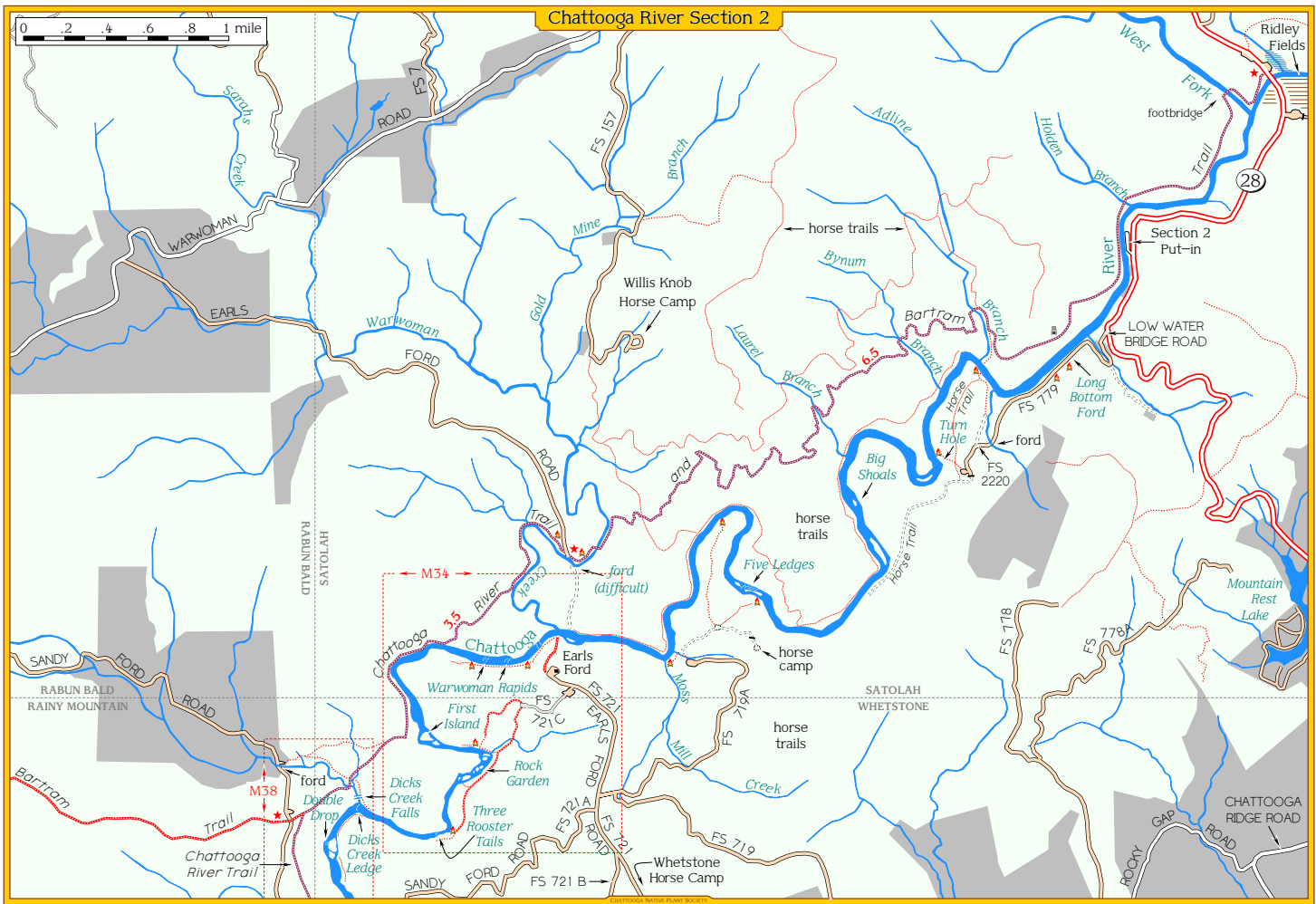


Foggy morning view from Rabun Bald. The little mountain, lower left, is Fodderstack.

<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i> , Golden Seal	<i>Pedicularis canadensis</i> , Lousewort	<i>Sorbus americana</i> , Mountain Ash
<i>Hypericum buckleii</i> , Blue Ridge St. Johnswort	<i>Picea rubens</i> , Red Spruce (planted)	<i>Stellaria pubera</i> , Giant Chick Weed
<i>Ilex montana</i> , Mountain Holly	<i>Pinus pungens</i> , Table Mountain Pine	<i>Streptopus roseus</i> , Twisted-stalk
<i>Impatiens pallida</i> , Pale Touch-me-not	<i>Poa autumnalis</i> , Autumn Meadow Grass	<i>Thalictrum clavatum</i> , Lady Rue
<i>Juniperus communis depressus</i> , Ground Juniper	<i>Polypodium virginiana</i> , Rock Cap Fern	<i>Thalictrum dioicum</i> , Early Meadow Rue
<i>Krigia montana</i> , Mountain Dwarf Dandelion	<i>Prosartes lanuginosa</i> , Yellow Mandarin	<i>Tilia americana heterophylla</i> , American Basswood
<i>Leucothoe recurva</i> , Mountain Dog Hobble	<i>Prosartes maculata</i> , Spotted Mandarin	<i>Tradescantia subaspera montana</i> , Appalachian Wide-leaved Spiderwort
<i>Ligusticum canadensis</i> , Lovage	<i>Quercus coccinea</i> , Scarlet Oak	<i>Trautvetteria carolinensis carolinensis</i> , Tassel Rue
<i>Lilium superbum</i> , Turk's Cap Lily	<i>Ranunculus abortivus</i> , Kidney-leaved Buttercup	<i>Trichomanes boschianum</i> , Filmy Fern
<i>Lysimachia ciliata</i> , Fringed Loosestrife	<i>Ranunculus acris</i> , Common Buttercup	<i>Trichomanes intracatum</i> , Grotto Felt
<i>Lysimachia quadrifolia</i> , Whorled Loosestrife	<i>Rhizomnium appalachianum</i> , Appalachian Rhizomnium Moss	<i>Trichophorum cespitosum</i> , Deer-hair Bulrush
<i>Maianthemum canadense</i> , False Lily of the Valley	<i>Rhododendron catawbiense</i> , Purple Laurel	<i>Trillium catesbeae</i> , Catesby's Trillium
<i>Maianthemum racemosum</i> , False Solomon's Seal	<i>Rhododendron vaseyi</i> , Pinkshell Azalea	<i>Trillium erectum</i> , Wake-robin
<i>Medeola virginiana</i> , Indian Cucumber Root	<i>Robinia hispida</i> , Bristly Locust	<i>Trillium undulatum</i> , Painted Trillium
<i>Melampyrum lineare</i> , Cow Wheat	<i>Rubus canadensis</i> , Smooth Blackberry	<i>Trillium vaseyi</i> , Nodding Red Trillium
<i>Melanthium parviflorum</i> , Appalachian Bunch Flower	<i>Sanguisorba canadensis</i> , Canada Burnet	<i>Triphora trianthophora</i> , Three Birds Orchid
<i>Menziesia pilosa</i> , Minnie Bush	<i>Sanicula canadensis</i> , Canada Black Snake Root	<i>Uvularia grandiflora</i> , Large-flowered Bellwort
<i>Mitella diphylla</i> , Miterwort	<i>Saxifraga michauxii</i> , Michaux's Saxifrage	<i>Vaccinium erythrocarpon</i> , Bear Berry
<i>Monarda clinipodia</i> , Basal Balm	<i>Selaginella apoda</i> , Meadow Spike Moss	<i>Vaccinium pallidum</i> , Low Blueberry
<i>Monotropa uniflora</i> , Indian Pipe	<i>Silene stellata</i> , Starry Champion	<i>Veratrum viride</i> , White Hellebore
<i>Morus rubra</i> , Red Mulberry	<i>Silene virginica</i> , Fire Pink	<i>Viburnum cassinoides</i> , Shonny Haw
<i>Osmunda claytoniana claytoniana</i> , Interrupted Fern	<i>Smilax biltmoreana</i> , Biltmore Carrion Flower	<i>Viburnum lantanoides</i> , Witch's Hobble
<i>Oxypolis rigidior</i> , Cowbane	<i>Smilax herbaceae</i> , Common Carrion Flower	<i>Viola rotundifolia</i> , Round-leaved Yellow Violet
<i>Packera obovata</i> , Round-leaved Ragwort	<i>Solidago caesia</i> , Blue-stem Goldenrod	<i>Zizia aurea</i> , Golden Alexanders
<i>Panax quinquefolium</i> , Ginseng	<i>Solidago simulans</i> , Granite Dome Goldenrod	
<i>Parnassia asarifolia</i> , Grass of Parnassus		



Snow covered Rabun Bald shot from Long Creek.



## Chattahoochee River Section 2

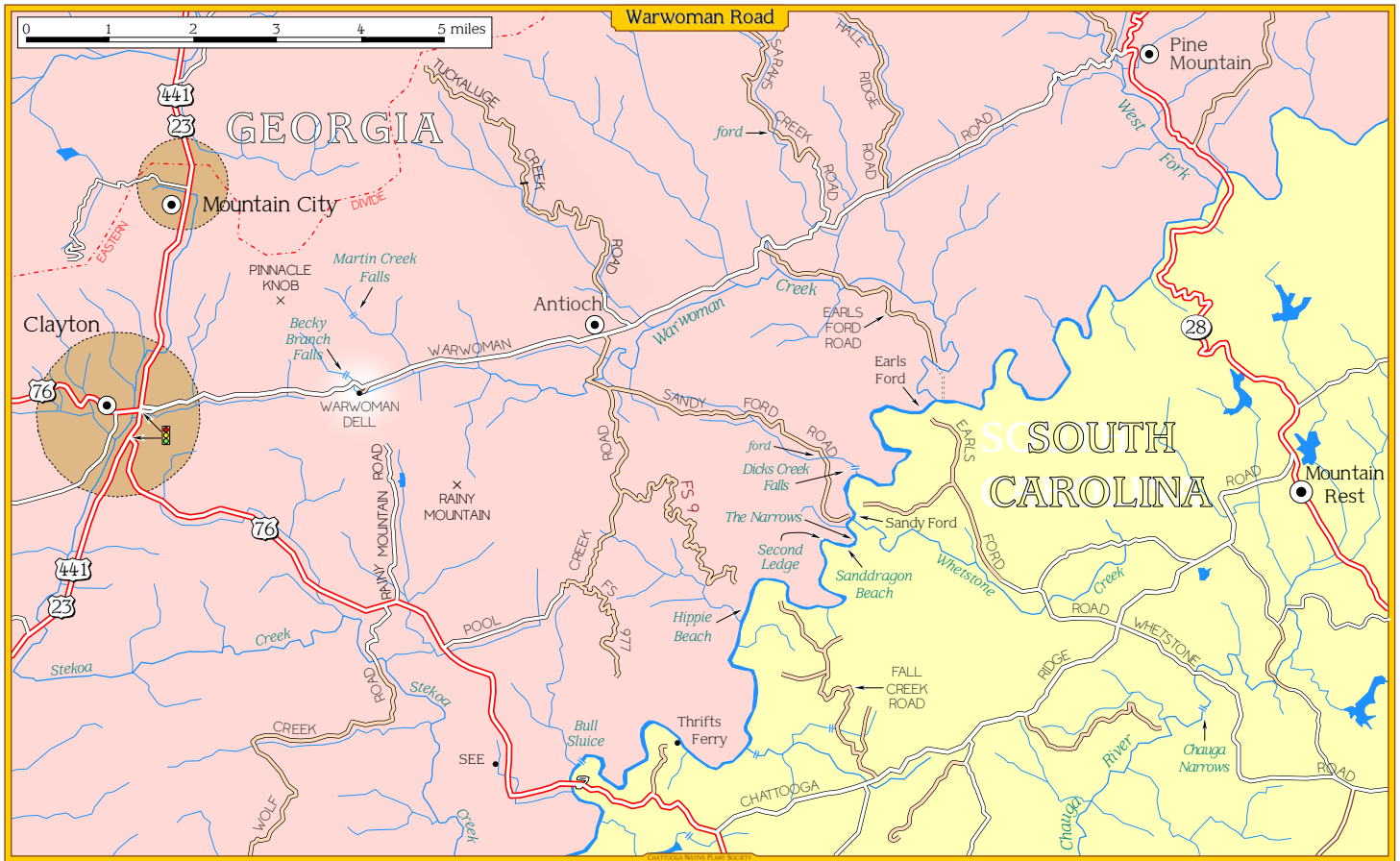
map above

Section 2 of the Chattahoochee River is from the Highway 28 bridge down to Earls Ford, about 7.5 river miles. The Highway 28 Section 2 put-in however is 1.4 miles south of the bridge making the float distance about 6.1 river miles. The put-in has a large paved parking lot, a toilet and a very short trail down to the river. Except for one class 2 rapid, Big Shoals, this stretch of river is easy boating as well as beautiful and great for fishing.

The **South Carolina side of the river** is paralleled by Highway 28 from the Highway 28 bridge southward to **Low Water Bridge Road** FS 779 (also known as Long Bottom Ford Road). There are numerous camping areas along this road. These campsites are mostly for those that want to camp next to their car or in a camper. After the camping areas the road veers away from the river, fords a small stream and ends at a gate with a parking area on the right. A trail from the parking area leads to a popular fishing spot on the river known as **Turn Hole**. A horse trail from the Whetstone Horse Camp comes through here and ends at a campsite on the river at another popular fishing spot. An easy hiker's trail from FS 2220 also leads to this campsite, about 0.4 miles. Horses sometimes ford the river just downstream near Adline Branch. The remainder of Section 2 is most easily reached by hiking in from FS 719A. Driving Whetstone Road this is the first road on the right past the Whetstone Horse Camp. Horses use the road to access their trails but there are no horse trails from the parking area at the end of the road. Here there are signs and a short trail, about 0.2 miles, that leads to a campsite at the confluence of Moss Mill Branch. At less than 0.1 mile along this trail notice a trail going right, remains of an old logging road. It goes to a small clearing, about 0.2 miles, where the road veers to the right and a trail goes to the left. The road goes on to the horseback rider's area. The trail going left is very well defined, virtually level for its entire length, about 0.6 miles, does have many old windfalls but they are quite easy to step over. There's a campsite and a large rock and sand beach at the river. To get to **Five Ledges** from the small clearing go straight. It looks impossible but not really bad, a big vegetated tank trap at the beginning. Stay in the very bottom of this cove, numerous windfalls, until you reach open woods near the river, only 0.2 miles. The riverbank here isn't hiker friendly, no beaches or rocks you can reach without wading or swimming. *See map above.*

The **Georgia side of the river** from the Highway 28 bridge down to Earls Ford Road affords a nice 7.5 mile hike on the Bartram Trail/Chattahoochee River Trail. There's a small parking area at the bridge with an information board and signs. An engraved rock points to the Bartram Trail trailhead on the other side of the highway. At only 0.3 miles along the trail there is an iron bridge crossing the West Fork. Beyond this point for the next couple of miles it is apparent that the land here was once occupied and farmed. Fishermen have created numerous trails that go down to the river in this area. There are also several intersecting horse trails not shown on the map. After crossing Adline Branch the trail remains some distance from the river. The riverside horse trail from this point shown on the above map is not at all well developed. Keep this in mind should you decide to try that route. There's another iron bridge crossing Warwoman Creek just before you reach Earls Ford Road. After crossing the Warwoman Creek bridge go left, downstream, until you come to Earls Ford Road. Cross the road and continue through the several large campsites. Yellow blazes do mark the trail through this busy area. The Chattahoochee River Trail for its entire length is well maintained and has footbridges across all streams of any significant size.



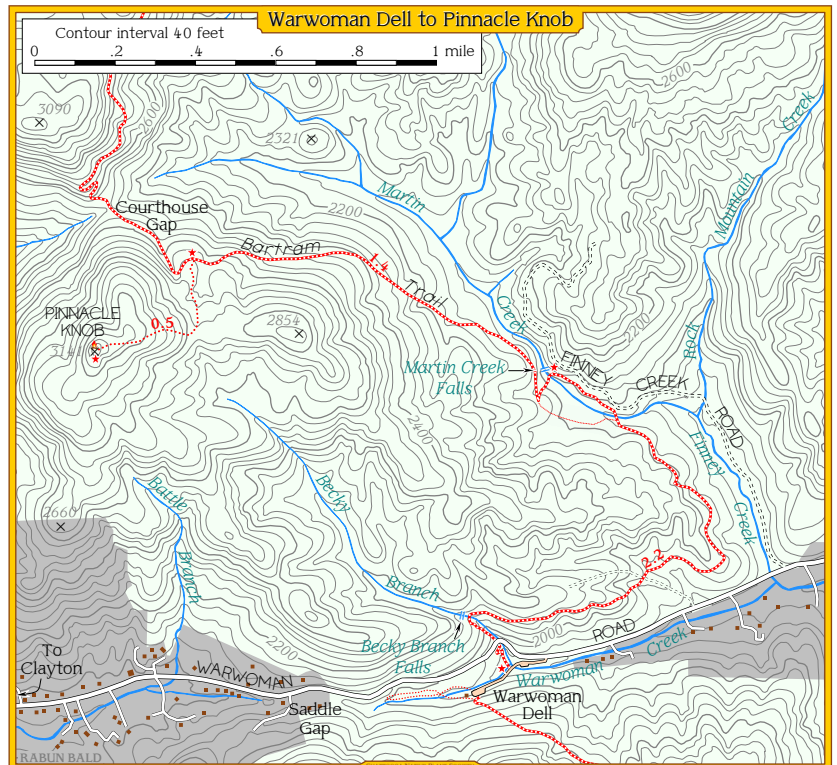


**Warwoman Road** map above

Warwoman Road allows access to some of our best wilderness areas. This east/west highway, about 15 miles long, connects Highway 441 in Clayton with Highway 28 north of the Highway 28 Chattooga River bridge. There are two traffic lights on Highway 441 in Clayton; the south traffic light at the Highway 76 junction and the north traffic light at Rickman Street. Warwoman Road is one block north of the north traffic light. You can also turn east at the north light onto Rickman Street which soon merges with Warwoman Road. If you are going north from the Highway 28 bridge, go 2.3 miles and look for a sign on the left that reads Clayton 17, this is Warwoman Road.

**Warwoman Dell\*** maps above & right →

(N34 52.951 W83 21.037) This is a small nature park off Warwoman Road 3 miles east of Highway 441 at Clayton. This little park has much to offer for the wildflower enthusiast. A pre-Civil War era railroad was being constructed here and parts of the old road bed can be seen cutting through the solid rock. When traveling from Clayton look for a sign, Warwoman Dell, then a very sharp right turn into the park. The Bartram trail comes from Pool Creek Road through the park, crosses Warwoman Road and goes north to Rabun Bald and Scaly Mountain. Some of the Warwoman Dell plants –



*Actaea pachypoda*, Bane Berry  
*Adiantum pedatum*, Maiden-hair Fern  
*Arisaema triphyllum*, Jack-in-the-pulpit  
*Asimina triloba*, Tall Pawpaw  
*Asplenium rhizophyllum*, Walking Fern  
*Botrychium virginiana*, Rattlesnake Fern  
*Cardamine flagellifera flagellifera*,  
 Blue Ridge Bitter Cress  
*Corallorrhiza odorhoriza*, Autumn Coral Root

*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*, Green Ash  
*Galearis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis  
*Laportea canadensis*, Wood Nettle  
*Lindera benzoin pubescens*, Spice Bush  
*Polypodium virginiana*, Rock Cap Fern  
*Prenanthes serpentina*, Lion's Foot  
*Prosartes lanuginosa*, Yellow Mandarin  
*Ranunculus hispidus*, Hairy Buttercup  
*Rubus phoenicolasius*, Wine Berry

*Trillium vaseyi*, Vasey's Trillium  
*Thaspium trifoliatum aureum*,  
 Yellow Meadow Parsnip  
*Viburnum acerifolium*, Maple-leaved Viburnum  
*Viburnum rufidulum*, Blue Haw  
*Viola hastata*, Halberd-leaved Violet  
*Viola rotundifolia*, Round-leaved Yellow Violet  
*Zizia trifoliata*, Mountain Golden Alexanders



**Rock Garden.** (N34 52.220 W83 14.130). A scenic area on section 3 about 2.1 river miles downriver from Earls Ford. Large rocks almost fill the river here for a 0.1 mile stretch. There are gravel bars and a very nice beach area at the downstream end of Rock Garden. A trail that drops down from the Three Rooster Tails trail has become fairly well defined. At the trailhead on the main trail, Rock Garden will not be visible but will have been visible for some time through the woods. At a point, N34 52.111 W83 14.207, about 0.6 miles from the trailhead look for a trail that goes steeply down to the right, about 300 feet downhill to the river. You will go beneath a small grotto with a firerig. This little drop-down trail is shown on maps page 32 and 36 as a tiny red-dotted line. Look closely for the trailhead, it is there. This is a rather short and easy hike, round trip distance of about 1.3 miles if you park at the trailhead and about 1.9 miles from the Earls Ford overflow parking area.



Rock Garden

**First Island**

*maps page 32, 34, 36, 37*

(N34 52.315 W83 14.411). The first big island boaters come to below Earls Ford. Don't know of another name for this spot. It is most easily reached by hiking upstream from the Rock Garden. At the lowest point near the river along the Three Rooster Tails Trail you can go off the trail (vague trail) and cross the little stream on the right. You will find a little crossing point. After crossing you will find a riverside trail that goes upstream to a well used campsite. If you continue upstream the trail disappears but you are then in a fairly open, easy hiking wooded flood plain. Continuing on you will come to First Island. It is possible to bushwhack on up to the trail that comes down from Earls Ford but you are forced up on the ridges at several points. It's at least half a mile from the campsite upstream before you find signs of the Earls Ford Trail.

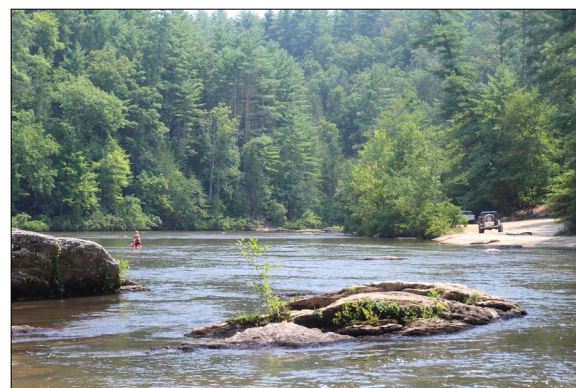


First Island

**Sandy Ford**

*maps page 26, 32, 33*

(N34 51.635 W83 14.792). This is a popular picnic and camping area along Section 3 of the Chattooga River. Roads lead to both sides of the river and the summer months can bring crowds of campers, picnickers and partygoers.



Sandy Ford

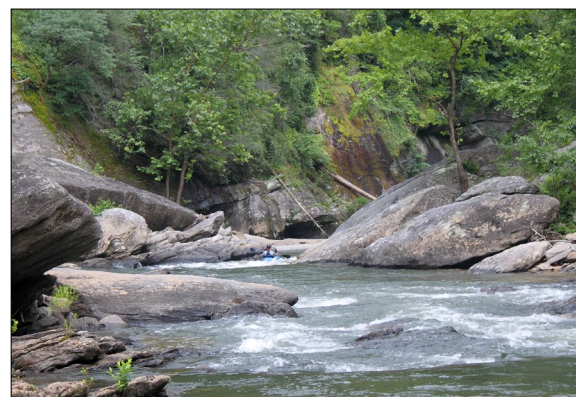
**Sandy Ford Georgia side.** On the Georgia side of the river the road goes all the way to the river. The beach area here is often very littered and the numerous unmanaged restroom areas in the nearby woods make this spot an inhospitable area for many wildflower enthusiast. This said, a check of the area (March 2013) shows that the litter problem has greatly improved, perhaps a cleanup by interested parties. In past summers the beach area on this side of the river has been the site of loud gatherings. Trucks are parked on the sand next to the river with their radio/CD players blasting music that can be heard for some distance. A trail goes along the river downstream from the beach area but virtually ends at Rock Creek, about 0.2 miles. From Clayton go east on Warwoman Road about 5.9 miles and turn right onto Sandy Ford Road (N34 53.472 W83 17.939). This road is also known as Dicks Creek Road. It ends at the river after about 4.9 miles. At 3.9 miles the road fords Dicks Creek. This ford can be intimidating for many cars, especially at high water. You might want to get out and take a good look before driving across. There is limited parking at the beach but usually not a real problem. There are numerous campsites with pull-outs along the road.

**Sandy Ford South Carolina side.** For the wildflower bug the South Carolina side is possibly best. On this side of the river an interesting and scenic rocky area is just upstream and a short hike downstream takes you across Whetstone Creek and to the Section 3 Chattooga Narrows. From the Highway 76 bridge go east 2.1 miles and turn left onto Chattooga Ridge Road (SC 196 on some maps). Go 5.8 miles to the Whetstone intersection (N34 50.479 W83 11.458), a 4-way stop. Turn left and go 3.2 miles (pavement ends at 1.8 miles) and turn left onto FS 721A. This is the first road on the left after you pass a large horseback riding camp, a sign clearly marks the road, FS 721A. It's about 1.7 miles long with a spacious parking area at the end. Only a few minutes walking down the trail to the river, about 0.2 miles. At the river there are several large campsites and a trail that goes upstream to Double Drop Island and downstream to the Chattooga Section 3 Narrows. *See next.*

**Chattooga Section 3 Narrows**

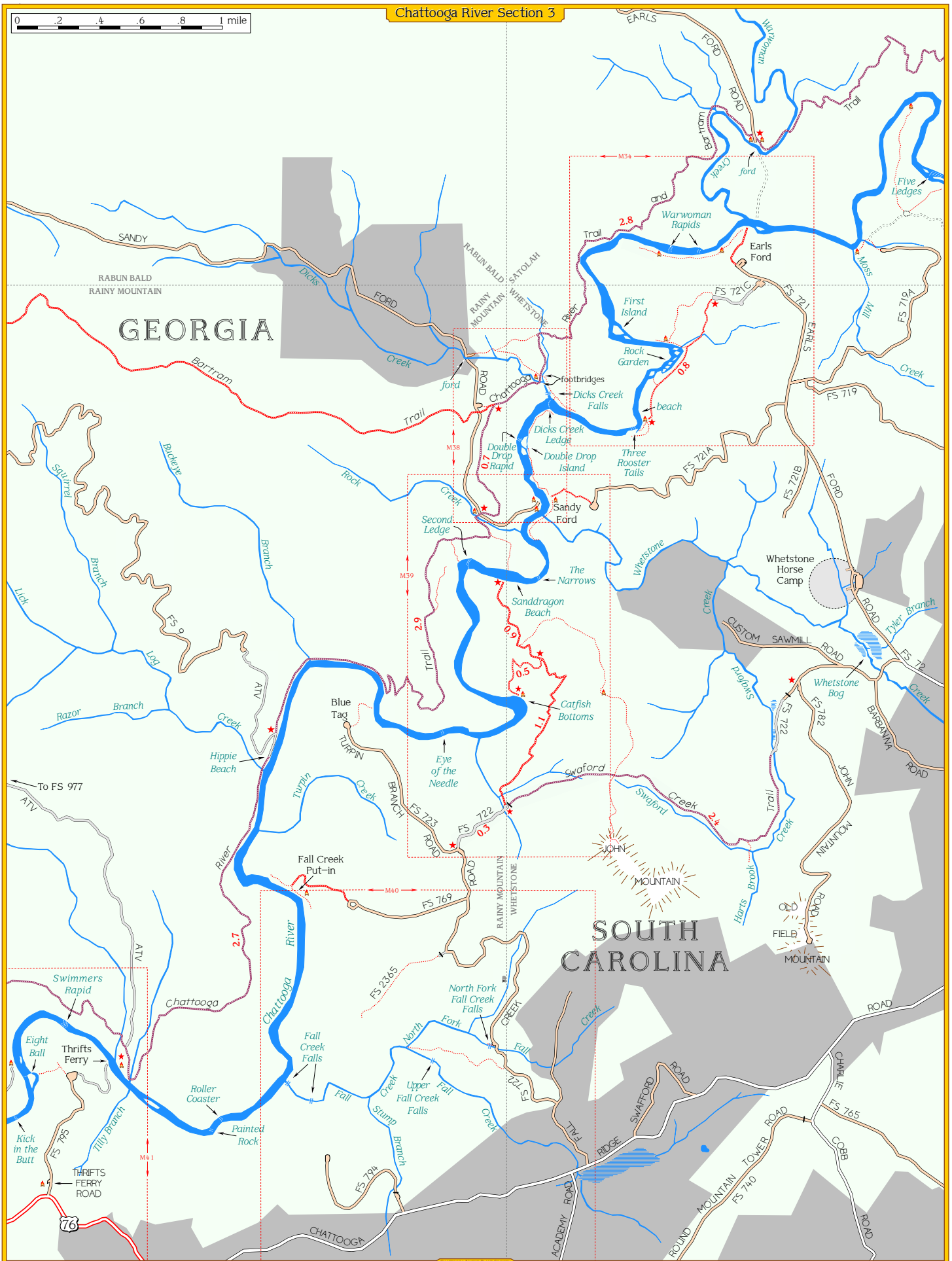
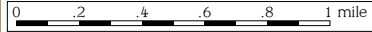
*maps page 33, 36, 39*

(N34 51.352 W83 14.778). This is a scenic area about 0.4 miles downstream of Sandy Ford. It is easily reached by hiking downstream along the riverside trail at Sandy Ford, South Carolina side of the river. Go down the trail from the Sandy Ford parking area. Near the river there is a large camping area on the left. The trail goes downstream right through this campsite, a few yards into the woods roughly paralleling the river. You must wade across Whetstone Creek or rock-hop at very low water. The trail ends well upstream of the Narrows but open areas with large easy to walk on rocks allow exploration and scenic views of the area. With a little effort you can hike to within 100 yards of the entrance to the Narrows. The rocks on either side of the river form a narrow channel well before the point actually known as the Narrows. This is a great place for an outing or a picnic. In the summer months and at low water it is a popular place for swimming and playing in the water.

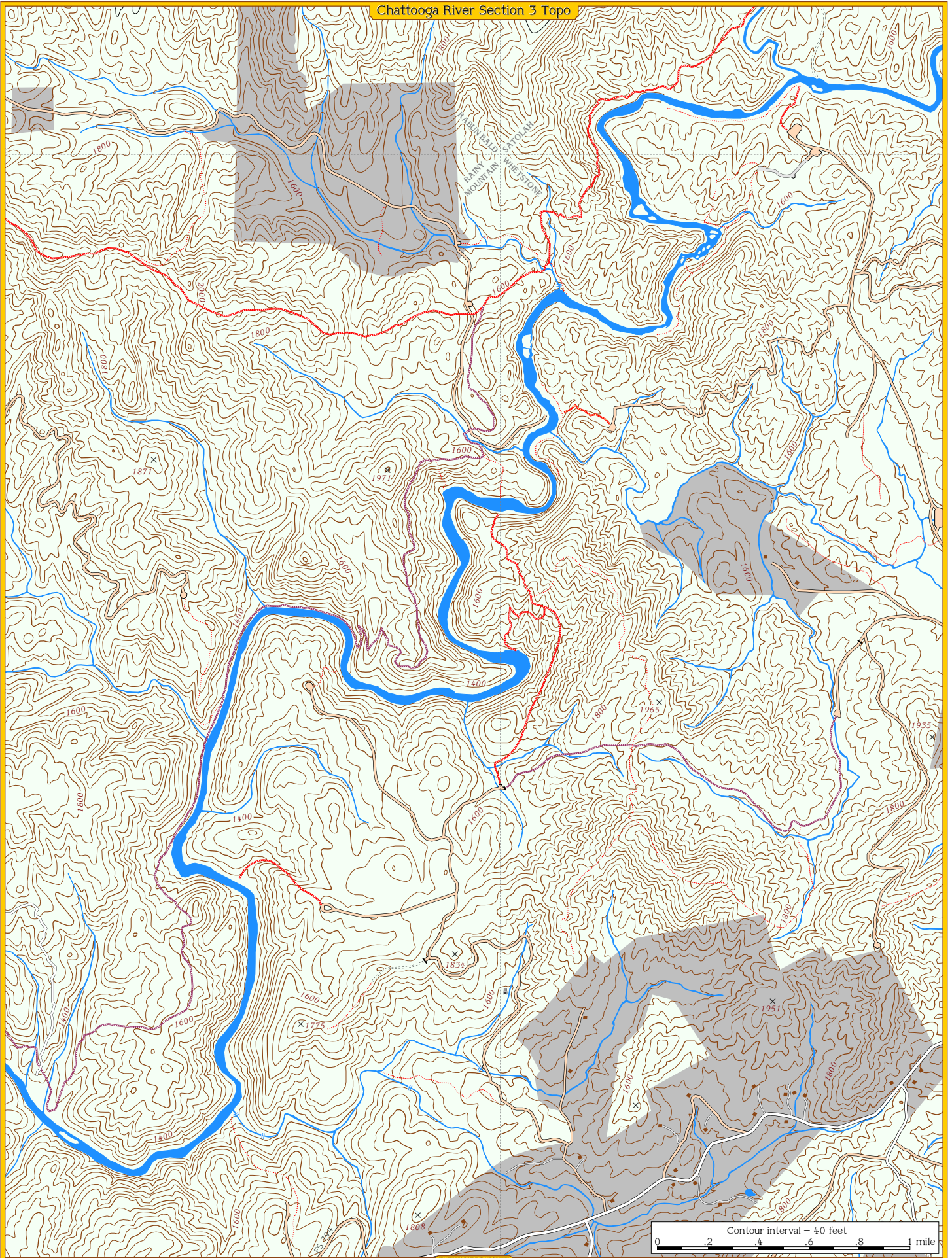


Boater entering the Narrows.

Chattooga River Section 3



Chattooga River Section 3 Topo



## Double Drop Island maps page 32, 36 and below right

Double Drop Island is only 0.3 miles upstream of Sandy Ford. On the South Carolina side of the river, the trail going upstream from Sandy Ford leads to a large rocky area along the river. From this point on a rather ill defined trail continues upstream to a very interesting island area; great for wildflowers and dragonflies. At normal water levels this island isn't really an island having only pools of water on its river left side. This river left side pool area really takes a beating at high water. The soil, sand and vegetation is constantly being scoured from pools and rearranged among the boulders. You will need to pick your way around the small pools, boulders and sand. At the top of the island there is a scenic rapid known as Double Drop, hence the island's name. Yet another ill defined trail continues on upstream to a bend in the river where you can see Dicks Creek Falls on the opposite bank of the river. Maps show the Georgia/South Carolina State line going river left of Double Drop Island. This means you can go from South Carolina to Georgia without crossing the Chattooga River.

## Dicks Creek Falls maps page 32, 33, 36 and below right

Dicks Creek Falls (N34 52.051 W83 14.765). Also known as Five Fingers Falls. As noted above, you can hike upstream from Double Drop Island to get a view of Dicks Creek Falls from the South Carolina side of the river. This falls overlooks a beautiful area along the Chattooga River known as Dicks Creek Ledge. Unfortunately exploring the area without getting in the water is all but impossible except at very low water levels. There are no beaches or user friendly shorelines. You must swim or wade to check out the numerous rock outcrops in the river. The falls are about 60 feet high and drop onto the rocks only a few yards from the river. The scenic Dicks Creek Ledge, also known as First Ledge, extends across the river from the falls angling downstream toward Double Drop Island. The hike to the falls is quite easy. When you come to the ford on Sandy Ford Road you can park at the little pull-out or ford the creek and park at a trailhead further down the road. The trail from the ford parking area to the falls is about 0.7 miles. It shortly comes to a small stream; hop across and go right. The trail forks a couple of times, go right to an intersection with the Bartram Trail at a small footbridge. Cross the bridge and hike on until you pass the top of the falls. Near the river look for a small downward path to the base of the falls. At low water you can get out on the rocks here for a good look at the falls. The hike to the falls is about the same distance if you hike in on the Bartram Trail. You must drive across Dicks Creek at the ford and go about 0.2 miles where the Bartram Trail crosses the road. You'll find a parking area on the left. A sign gives directions to the various trails. The hike from here to the falls is about 0.5 miles. After a small footbridge that crosses Dicks Creek look for another bridge on your right; this trail goes down to the falls. At the river the trail seems to continue upstream along the bank but it soon disappears.

## Whetstone Bog\* map page 36

(N34 51.059 W83 13.139). A boggy area near Whetstone Creek. There is a pull-out on the left about 0.2 miles beyond the end of the paved portion of Earls Ford Road. A short walk down into the woods and you will find an extensive bog left and right. This is a treasure for the botanist studying rare and unusual plants of our area. Some plants include; Southern Blue Flag, *Iris virginica*; Arrow Arum, *Peltandra virginica*; Quillwort, *Isoetes engelmannii*. The Star-nosed Mole, *Condylura cristata*, has been recorded here.

## Swaford Creek Trail maps page 36, 37

Before we leave Earls Ford Road we need to take a look at the Swaford Creek area. Until the mid 1990s you could drive Fall Creek Road FS 722 all the way to Earls Ford Road in an ordinary car. Around 1995 the road became so degraded by 4-wheelers that it was closed. This closed 2.4 mile stretch of road is now a well maintained trail, almost level for its entire length. In earlier days there was a beautiful marsh at the confluence of Swaford Creek and Harts Brook. It is no longer there, dry as a bone, duck boxes are still on a couple of trees. A trail, not easily noticed, goes south here, crosses Swaford Creek and parallels Harts Brook ending at private property off Chattooga Ridge Road. Hikers from this residential area have several trails that originate on their property, mostly trails east of John Mountain. There's a very noticeable trail intersection about a mile from the western end of the trail. Here a trail goes south and climbs steeply to a trail on John Mountain, about 0.4 miles. In 2010 the Forest Service put up a Carsonite sign along this trail warning against trail building and since then the trail has all but disappeared. The trail going north from the intersection goes up a ridge, a campsite at the top, then down to meet the trail to Sanddragon Beach, about 1.4 miles.



Double Drop Island



Dicks Creek Falls



## Fall Creek Road maps page 36, 37, 46 & right →

(N34 48.865 W83 14.570). Fall Creek Road FS 722 is 2.6 miles long, goes north from Chattooga Ridge Road into wilderness areas along Section 3 of the Chattooga River. From Highway 76 turn onto Chattooga Ridge Road, drive 2.1 miles and turn left onto Fall Creek Road. You will need to turn left after 0.3 miles, straight leads to a residential dead end. A street sign, “Fall Creek Road ext”, marks the intersection. At 2.3 miles a road, FS 769, goes left. Another 0.3 miles and Turpin Branch Road goes left while straight ahead Fall Creek Road turns into a 4-wheel drive road. Most people choose to park here rather than drive the 0.3 mile 4-wheel section to the end of the road. The road ends at small parking area (N34 50.358 W83 14.976) with barely enough space for two vehicles. A steep clay bank makes parking here a little tricky, especially if the clay is wet. There is a trailhead on the left next to a large rock. The closed portion of the road (Swaford Creek Trail) is straight ahead with a metal gate blocking it. The trail on the left is marked with a Carsonite sign and is known by some as the **Catfish Bottoms Trail**. Horseback riders and mountain bikers do sometimes illegally use this trail but don't cause much of a problem. It leads to two locations on the river; Catfish Bottoms and Sanddragon Beach.

## Catfish Bottoms maps page 36, 37 & right →

(N34 50.792 W83 14.965). This is a broad gentle curve in the river, good catfishing. There's a large level area for camping and a small sandy beach. Like many of our trails the Catfish Bottoms Trail follows the coves and ridges and remains quit level until it starts down to the river. From the trailhead, see above, hike about 1.2 miles to the first fork; a grassy clearing where the trail turns right around a ridge. The trail (N 34 50.974 W83 14.853) is on the left, go left. The trail winds down a cove about 0.5 miles to the river. Some level places but mostly downhill, not steep or difficult. One way hike of about 1.9 miles from Fall Creek Road.

## Sanddragon Beach maps page 36, 37 & right →

(N34 51.290 W83 15.002). A scenic beach area downstream of the Chattooga Narrows. Named for the Common Sanddragon dragonflies found there. This is a gentle 2.3 mile one way hike if you park at the Turpin Branch Road intersection. There are a couple of forks in the trail. About 1.1 miles to the Catfish Bottoms Trail on the left and another 0.1 mile to the trail that goes to the right up the ridge and back to the old road. Stay on the main trail. Near the end it goes down a ravine to the river. Hike a short distance upstream to a nice sandy beach area a hundred yards or so below the Narrows. This is a great area for wildflowers, photography, swimming and exploring.

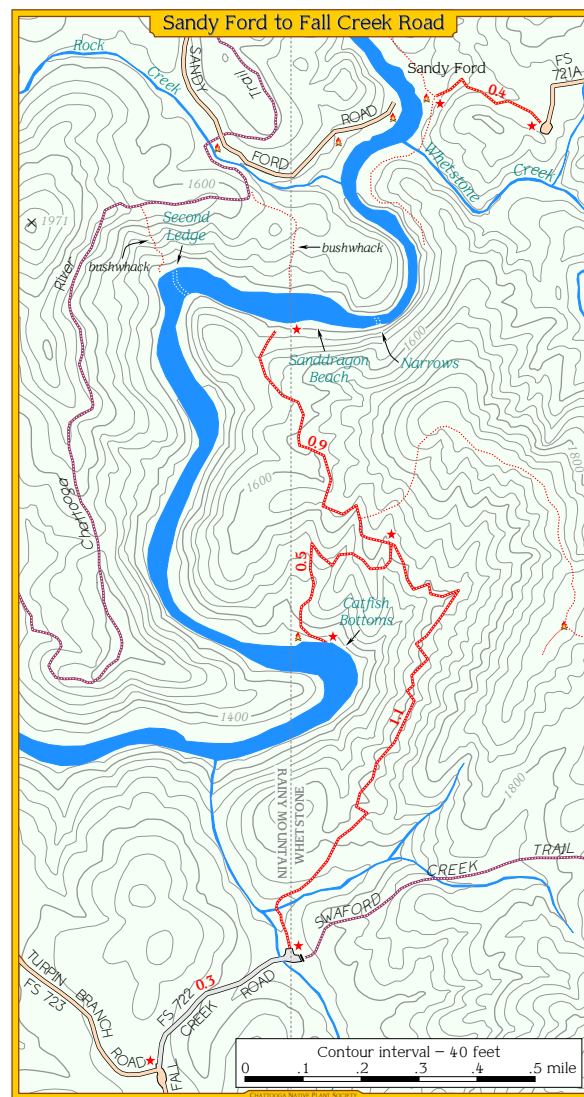
**Georgia side.** There is a short hike in to the Georgia side of Sanddragon Beach. The trail is very vague and shown as a fine dotted line on maps page 36 and 37. Hiking from the Rock Creek campsite hike only 0.1 mile and notice the vague trail veering off to the left. It soon follows the remains of an old logging road then turns right and goes down a cove to the river, about 0.3 miles. The forest is fairly open here, easy walking. The trail is the remnant of an old horse trail up from a ford below Sanddragon Beach. While hiking the river bank downstream to Second Ledge from the ford is difficult it's only a short walk upstream to the bottom of the Narrows. *See next.*

## Second Ledge maps page 33, 36, 37 & right →

(N34 51.349 W83 15.215). Second Ledge is a scenic falls that spans the Chattooga River about 0.4 miles downstream of the Narrows. The ledge is only 5 or so feet high but extends from bank to bank presenting quite an obstacle for boaters. The Georgia side of the river has good photo opportunities. If the lighting is right, with little mist rising from the river, the cliff area at the bottom of the Narrows can be seen upriver. From the Rock Creek campsite (N34 51.558 W83 15.123) on Sandy Ford Road hike south on the Chattooga River Trail 0.3 miles. This distance was measured with GPS at 1,838 feet or 0.348 miles. At this spot, N34 51.455 W83 15.269, you will find a clearing on the left. This is not really a clearing but the first point along the trail that vaguely resembles a clearing. It's at the backbone of a ridge that goes directly down to Second Ledge, quite steep but not difficult. The vegetation is very thick but surprisingly easy to walk through. You will encounter boulders near the bottom of the ridge. This bushwhack down the ridge to the river is 1,186 feet or 0.225 miles and is shown as a fine dotted line on the maps. Total hike one way from the Rock Creek campsite is 0.573 miles. Bushwhacking to the South Carolina side of Second Ledge is difficult. The South Carolina side of the riverbank in the Second Ledge area is not at all hiker friendly.

## Blue Tag maps page 36, 37

(N34 50.680 W83 15.816). I've heard this is the name given to the end of Turpin Branch Road, FS 723, an old hunter's camp. A trail on the right goes down to the river, about 0.3 miles, but the Forest Service has installed a Carsonite sign at the trailhead that reads “**Notice This trail is steep and difficult to maintain. To minimize erosion and protect the river, please use this trail only for emergencies. Thank you for your cooperation.**”. The short trail ends at the river, no beach, probably best to use it only for evacuations.



Second Ledge.

**Fall Creek Put-in** *maps page 36, 37*

(N34 49.970 W83 16.052). The Fall Creek put-in is misnamed since it has nothing to do with Fall Creek, maybe just because it is off Fall Creek Road. After about 2.3 miles on Fall Creek Road turn left onto FS 769 and drive about 0.6 miles to a parking area at the end of the road. The hike down to the river, dreaded by rafters, is about 0.5 miles. Trails at the river go upstream and downstream but only for a short distance. There are several popular campsites. Some hikers try to hike down to Fall Creek from here, a distance of about 1 mile, but the very thick vegetation and rough terrain make for very slow progress – this route not recommended.

**Fall Creek Falls** *maps page 36, 37, 46 and right →*

**North Fork Fall Creek Falls.** (N34 49.359 W83 15.089). There is a small waterfall on the North Fork Fall Creek. After the left turn onto FS 722 (Fall Creek Road ext) go 0.5 miles to a large culvert beneath the road. The culvert and stream are impossible to see through the vegetation but black and yellow diagonally striped road signs (Ⓟ) mark the stream crossing. Drive past the signs to a pull-out on the left. Park here and walk only a few yards downstream, river right, to the falls.

**Fall Creek Falls.** (N34 49.117 W83 16.002) This picturesque falls is located about 0.1 miles upstream of the confluence with the Chattooga River. It is most easily reached by bushwhacking down the ridge from the end of FS 794. Total hike of about a 1.4 miles from the Forest Service road barrier. From the right side of the clearing at the end of FS 794 hike a few yards down to the remains of an old logging road. Follow this road down the right side of the ridge to Fall Creek. Stump Branch will be on your right. Cross Fall Creek in this area and continue downstream along barely discernible trails to the falls. There are more falls downstream but they are deep within a densely vegetated cove. To get to FS 794 (N34 48.669 W83 15.558) turn onto Chattooga Ridge Road from Highway 76 and drive about 1.1 miles. FS 794 is on the left, park at the barrier, about 0.7 miles to the end of the road.

**Upper Fall Creek Falls.** (N34 49.314 W83 15.382) A well defined trail leads from Fall Creek Road down a ridge to the confluence of Fall Creek and its North Fork, about 0.6 miles. The trail is mostly level at the beginning then starts down the ridge. At about 0.5 miles you will hear and see Upper Fall Creek Falls through the trees on your left. The trailhead is about 0.4 miles along the Fall Creek Road extension, FS 722. Count the right hand turns; the trailhead is on the left at the beginning of the third right turn.

**Pool Creek Road** *maps page 33, 68, 69*

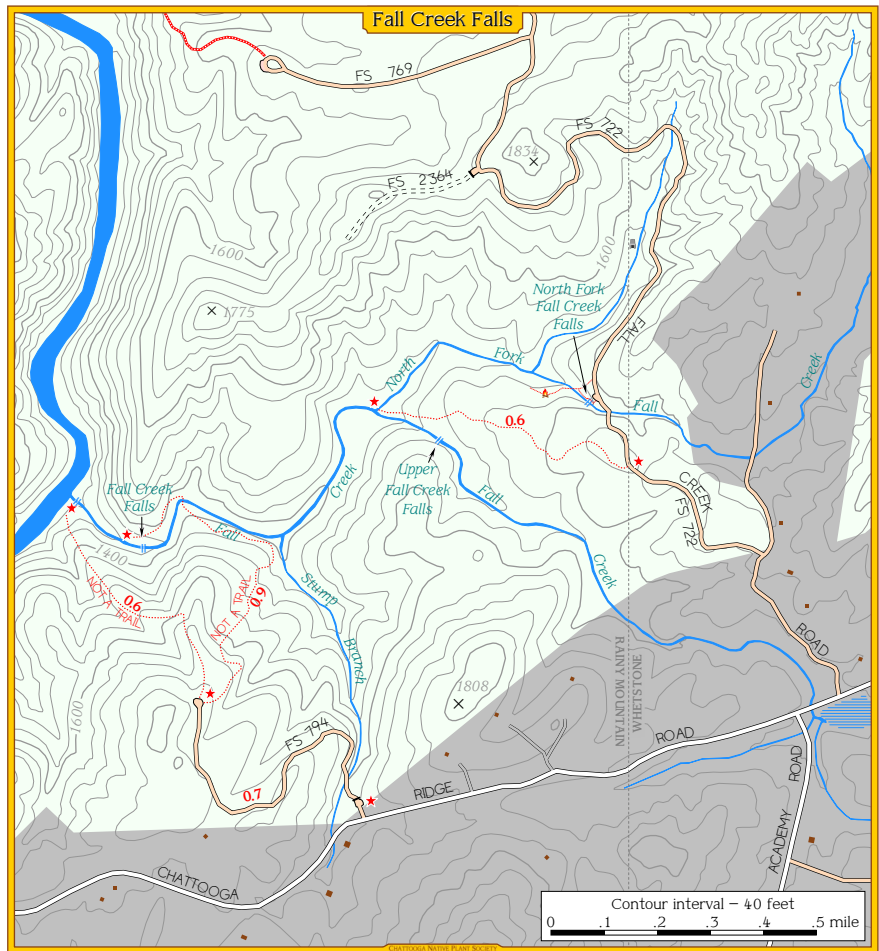
A 5 mile long road on the Georgia side of the river that connects Highway 76 to Sandy Ford Road. From the Highway 76 Chattooga River bridge drive west about 2.9 miles and turn right onto Pool Creek Road (N34 50.235 W83 19.948). It goes up through the Pool Creek valley for 1.7 miles where the pavement ends. From this point on to Sandy Ford Road it is a narrow winding dirt road with numerous switchbacks and tight turns all within a wilderness area. Be aware that you can meet an oncoming vehicle at any of the many blind curves. To come in from Sandy Ford Road drive east from Clayton on Warwoman Road about 5.8 miles and turn right onto Sandy Ford Road. The intersection with Pool Creek Road is about 0.9 miles, well marked with a road sign, it forks off to the right. See *Warwoman Road Map page 33*.

**Bartram Trail at Pool Creek Road** *map page 69*

(N34 52.333 W83 17.692). The Bartram Trail crosses Pool Creek Road about 2.4 miles from where the pavement ends. You can't miss this trailhead. There's a generous pull-out with five large rocks and a Carsonite sign. The trail going east climbs to the top of a ridge and for the most part stays up high until it reaches Sandy Ford Road, a one way hike of about 3.4 miles. Near the mid-point of this stretch it will become evident that ATVs have been traveling through the area. While staying off the Bartram Trail they do cross it a couple of times. Going west from Pool Creek Road the Bartram Trail again goes upward along a ridge to Rainy Mountain then on to Warwoman Dell, a more strenuous hike of about 4 miles. Rainy Mountain is a complex mountain and the Bartram Trail follows its northern slopes going in and out the many coves and ridges. Beautiful, although not really old, hardwood forest along this trail.

**Squirrel Branch Road, Hippie Beach Road FS 9** *maps page 33, 36, 37, 41, 46*

(N34 51.851 W83 17.766). Driving north from Highway 76, this is the second drivable dirt road along the dirt portion of Pool Creek Road. There are no road signs at this intersection but it is easily recognized as the only well defined dirt road off to the right, about 1.3 miles north of the first dirt road, FS 977. FS 9 is quite long, about 4.5 miles, barely drivable in an ordinary car, a few sketchy places but no real problem. The many puddles in wet weather are shallow and are hard bottomed. Park at the end of the road and hike about 0.6 miles down to the Chattooga River Trail, go right 0.2 miles to Hippie Beach (said that hippies once lived here). You'll find a large campsite (N34 50.551 W83 16.209) and a nice sand beach. The trail from the end of FS 9 to Hippie Beach is frequented by ATV riders and the Forest Service has apparently tried to keep them from using the trail by constructing numerous tank traps along the way. It actually looks like these traps might finally be working.



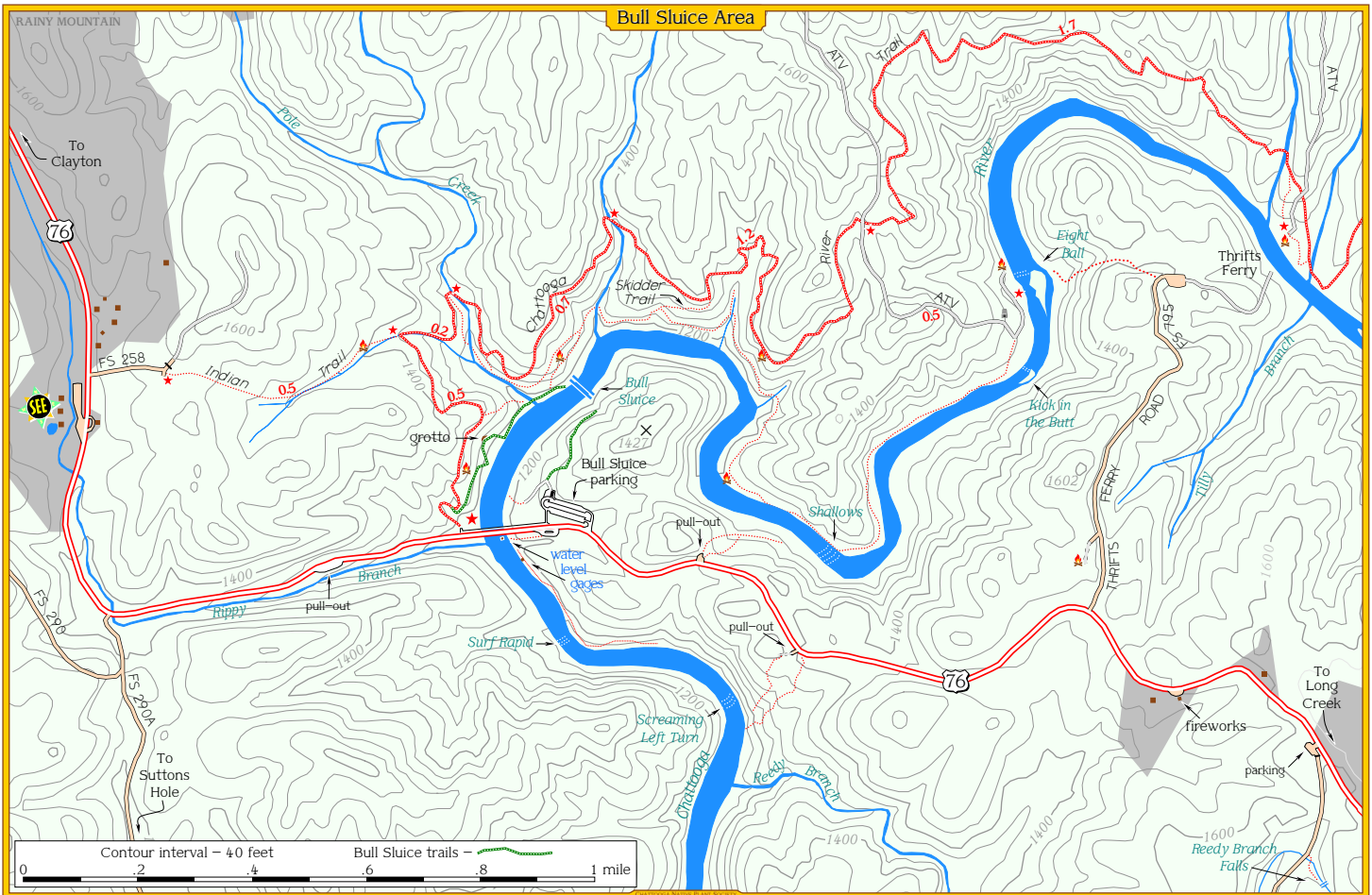


**FS 977 to Eight Ball and Thrifts Ferry** maps page 33, 36, 37, 41, 46

(N34 50.943 W83 18.191). After only 0.4 miles on the dirt portion of Pool Creek Road you will find FS 977 on your right, about 2.1 miles long ending in a large open parking area. Trails used by ATV riders go down to Eight Ball and Thrifts Ferry on the Georgia side of the river. There is a large campsite along the trail where one trail goes left, one right. Once you are on one of these trails you will notice an occasional side trail but in general if you keep going downward on the most well developed trail you will come to the Chattooga River Trail. One such intersection is north of Thrifts Ferry, one at Thrifts Ferry and one at the trail that goes down to Eight Ball. Thrifts Ferry is the site of an old ferry, a large camping area on the Georgia side of the river. A riverside trail from the Highway 76 bridge ends at Eight Ball, see *Lower Chattooga River Trail*, next page.



Eight Ball



**Thrifts Ferry Road to Thrifts Ferry and Eight Ball** maps page 33, 36, 37, 41, 46

From the Highway 76 bridge drive east about 1.2 miles, turn left onto Thrifts Ferry Road, FS 795, formerly known as Tilly Branch Road. (N34 48.723 W83 17.322). It's the first dirt road on the left east of the Highway 76 bridge. This is a FS road about 0.9 miles long, ends at a parking area with an information board. This can be a very busy place with boaters and rafting company buses putting in and taking out here. At the parking area the Thrifts Ferry Trailhead is right next to the information board, about 0.3 miles down to the river where there is a boat launching area.

**Eight Ball.** (N34 49.190 W83 17.405). This is a rapid on Section 3 of the Chattooga River. Here the river spreads out and creates several small islands and interesting rocky areas. For boaters a large rock in the river is said to look like an eight ball as it comes into view. Rafters and boaters often stop for lunch at a small sand beach on Eight Ball Island. Just when you turn right to enter the Thrifts Ferry parking lot notice a trailhead on the left; has a fallen log across it. This is the trail to Eight Ball. The trail goes only yards up to a saddle and then goes left down a narrow cove to the river, a hike of less than 0.3 miles from the parking area. The flat area at the bottom of this cove has several *Stewartia ovata*, the Mountain Camellia, blooms mid May to early July. *Lysimachia fraseri*, Fraser's Loosestrife has been recorded on Eight Ball Island.

**The Shallows** maps page 41, 43, 46

The Chattooga Shallows. (N34 48.867 W83 17.868). As the name implies this is a shallow stretch of the river. At one time a small beach area just downstream of the shallows on the South Carolina side was a popular swimming spot. Several years ago high water and floods changed that beach into a muddy area. However, there's still a very nice sandy beach on the Georgia side of the river. It is a popular lunch spot for rafters and boaters.

**South Carolina side.** From the Highway 76 bridge go east about 0.4 miles and notice a small pull-out on the left (N34 48.798 W83 18.042). A mound of soil blocks an old logging road here. A maximum of 2 or 3 cars will fit in this tiny pull-out. Some boaters like to launch from here. Two trails leave this pull-out area for the river but join shortly and lead upriver to the shallows, about 400 yards.

**Georgia side.** Hike to Bull Sluice from the Highway 76 bridge then follow the Lower Chattooga River Trail to The Shallows. The hike from the sluice is about 0.9 miles; total distance from the Bull Sluice parking lot is about 1.8 miles. Just before you reach the Shallows you will notice a well established campsite on the right. It has a nice sand and rock beach. Since it has no name that I know of I call it the Shallows Camp and the Shallows Camp Beach (N34 48.926 W83 17.994). See *Lower Chattooga River Trail*, below for more details.



*The Shallows on the Georgia side of the river.*

**Lower Chattooga River Trail** maps page 41, 44, 46

The (Upper) Chattooga River Trail begins at the Highway 76 Chattooga River bridge. This can be a place of much activity, especially in the summer months. Park at the Bull Sluice parking lot on the South Carolina side of the river. There's an information board next to a set of stairs that go down to the bridge. The Lower Chattooga River Trail isn't an official trail so it isn't shown on the information board. The lower trail isn't new, been there for many years. A pedestrian walkway across the bridge takes you directly to the Chattooga River Trail trailhead. The trail immediately starts up the slope and then away from the river. At about 70 yards into the hike there's a trail to the right. This is the beginning of the Lower Chattooga River Trail. If you are one that likes to stay closer to the river this trail is an alternate route, virtually the same distance, that lets you rejoin the (Upper) Chattooga River Trail near Eight Ball. There are several trails that drop down from the upper trail to the lower trail but you will need to study the Bull Sluice Area Topo map, previous page, to be able to find them. If you are hiking with a large pack you may have some obstacles such as windfalls but it can be worth it to get closer to the river. The first, sometimes insurmountable obstacle, is **Pole Creek**. You must wade or rock hop this stream to get to Bull Sluice, quite easy at low water. There are three other streams before you get to the Shallows but they are quite small and very easy to cross. The trail veers away from the river just before it gets to **Kick in the Butt**. You can get glimpses of this rapid and island area while hiking the trail close to the river. When the trail starts uphill away from the river go off trail to the right only a few yards through the woods, then climb down the rocks to the rapid. Near Eight Ball you'll find an ATV trail that continues upriver. As soon as the ATV trail comes down near the river you can see Eight Ball and the sandy island beach. The trail ends at a campsite a short distance upstream. To get back up to the (Upper) Chattooga River Trail follow the ATV trail up the ridge. As you start up look to the right for the remains of a beautiful old stone chimney.

Lower Chattooga River Trail Mileage	
Bull Sluice Parking .....	0.0
Highway 76 Bridge Trailhead .....	0.2 ..... 0.2
Bull Sluice.....	0.3 ..... 0.5
Shallows Campsite.....	0.8 ..... 1.3
Shallows .....	0.2 ..... 1.5
Kick in the Butt .....	0.7 ..... 2.2
Eight Ball .....	0.1 ..... 2.3
(Upper) Chattooga River Trail.....	0.4 ..... 2.7

**Bull Sluice** maps page 41, 44, 46

(N34 49.057 W83 18.245). This is a very popular and scenic class 4 to 5 waterfall just upstream of the Highway 76 bridge. There are excellent beaches and swimming areas for children and adults from the sluice downstream to the bridge. Needless to say it is one of the most visited and photographed spots on the river. You can't miss the large parking area at the Highway 76 bridge.

**South Carolina side of the Sluice.** The Sluice is easier to reach on this side of the river. There's a paved parking lot with restrooms (chemical toilets) and a paved trail for boaters leads to a launch area at the river. A small dirt trail forks to the right off the paved trail and goes upstream to the sluice. This is a great place to swim, picnic or just sit and watch boaters and rafters challenge the sluice. At high water, people often come here to view and photograph the raging river. Kayakers sometimes opt to put in here above the Sluice rather than the launch beach near the bridge.

**Georgia side of the Sluice.** The Georgia side is a stopping place for rafters and boaters where they scout the rapid before running it. To hike to the Georgia side of the sluice park in the South Carolina parking lot and cross the bridge to the Chattooga River Trail trailhead. An engraved stone marks the trailhead. The trail goes upward and to the right. Before reaching the top of this little ridge, 70 yards, you will notice a fork to the right; follow this to the sluice, about 0.3 mile. You will come down to the river and have to wade or rock hop across Pole Creek.



*Bull Sluice. Rafters standing on Georgia Rock.*

## Mr. Joker Grotto\* maps page 44, 46

(N34 49.002 W83 18.383). This is a small overhanging cliff along the Lower Chattooga River Trail to Bull Sluice, Georgia side. An easy 15-minute walk from the parking lot. This is perhaps the easiest walk if you want to see Filmy Fern, *Trichomanes boschianum*, and Dwarf Filmy Fern, *Trichomanes peterstii*. Also Grotto Alum Root, *Heuchera parviflora*. In the spring there is a beautiful display of Cross Vine, *Bignonia capreolata*, atop the cliffs adjoining the grotto on the right. Visitors to this tiny grotto have built fires that have almost destroyed these plants. It can also be a dangerous place – slabs of rock occasionally fall from the roof. It is a good place to seek refuge from sudden summer storms. From the Georgia side of the Highway 76 bridge hike the Chattooga River Trail and turn right onto the Lower Chattooga River Trail, *see previous page*, about 240 feet. The trail drops down to the river, about 0.2 miles to the grotto.

## Chattooga River Trail in the Bull Sluice Area map page 68

The Chattooga River Trail goes north from the Georgia side of the Highway 76 bridge. It is well maintained with footbridges crossing the streams and few steep places. It follows the ridges and covers some distance from the river until it gets to Thrifts Ferry, about 3.3 miles. From here it goes back up and over a ridge coming down to the river again near Hippy Beach. For an overview and mileages of the entire Chattooga River Trail *see Our Nationally Recognized Trails, page 68*.

## Indian Trail maps page 41, 44, 46, 68, 69

Also known as the Southeastern Trail. (N34 49.078 W83 18.992). This short trail connects FS 258, near Southeastern Expeditions (SEE) on Highway 76, with the Chattooga River Trail. The trail, only one half mile long, closely follows a small stream in a very rich cove, good for wildflowers. This trail lets you access the Chattooga River Trail without crossing the Highway 76 bridge. From the bridge drive west about 1 mile to SEE. A few yards past SEE you will find FS 258 on the right (N34 49.079 W83 19.137); a very easy to miss, almost hidden, short dirt road. You can park at the end of FS 258 or in the guest parking lot at SEE and walk from there. The Forest Service has recently put a Carsonite sign at the trailhead; hiking only, no bikes or ATVs. The Indian Trail intersection with the Chattooga River Trail is at a small footbridge (N34 49.146 W83 18.565); the first bridge hiking from the Highway 76 trailhead, about 0.5 miles. If you're hiking south on the Chattooga River Trail this footbridge is the first bridge, about 0.2 miles, after you cross Pole Creek. The Pole Creek bridge is a large wooden bridge with handrails on both sides then a very small bridge across a little seepage.

## Chattooga River Section 4 maps page 44, 46, 49, 50, 51

This section of the Chattooga begins at the Highway 76 bridge and ends at Tugaloo Lake. Some say Section 4 begins at Woodall Shoals. It is true that many section 4 boaters put in at Woodall Shoals. Rafting companies like to keep a fairly consistent time schedule so they put in at different places at different water levels since the water travels at different speeds according to the level. This section of river has the river's most challenging rapids and should not be attempted by inexperienced boaters. Section 4 is severely lacking in riverside trails but there are numerous trails that go into the river from various points.

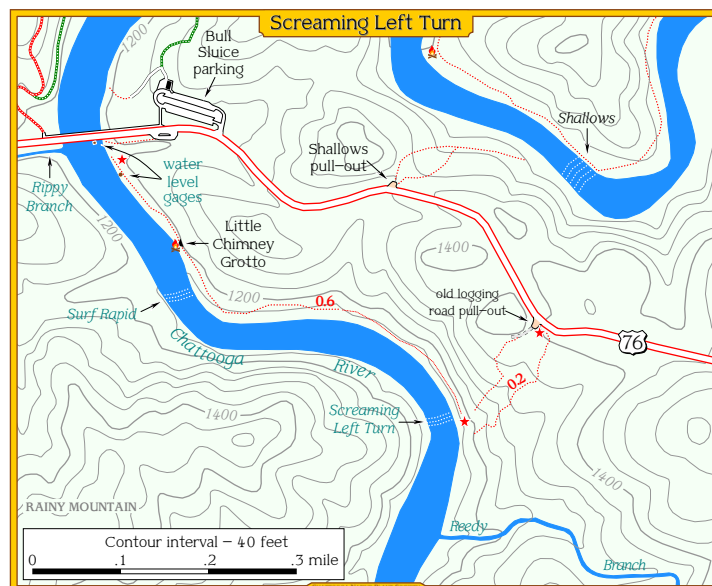
## Screaming Left Turn maps page 41, 44, 46 & below

(N34 48.558 W83 17.975). This is a class 4 rapid on the Chattooga River downstream of the Highway 76 bridge, a very scenic area not often visited by hikers. As boaters round a right turn of the river they are suddenly faced with an abrupt left turn. At least two vague trails lead to this spot from Highway 76. They are evacuation trails used by rafting companies should they have to get an injured

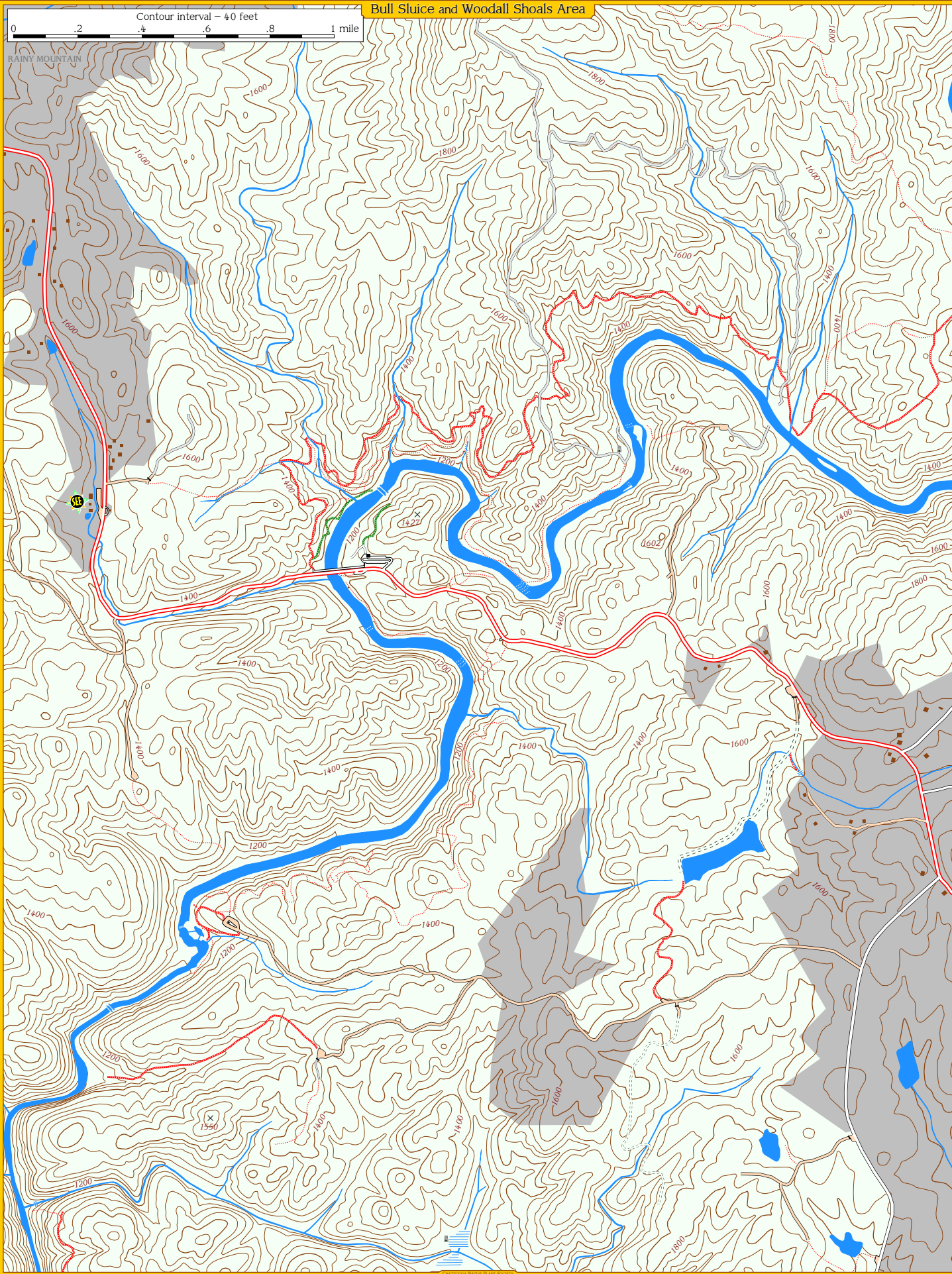
rafter off the river. From the Highway 76 bridge drive east beyond the Shallows pull-out on the left to a small pull-out on the right. It's about 0.6 miles from the bridge. This pull-out is grassy as opposed to the usual bare dirt pull-outs. A post with two small yellow reflectors marks the spot. In 2010 these trails were mapped with GPS. From the pull-out hike down the old road and notice that the trail turns left and goes down the top of a small ridge. This trail eventually fades out but it's easy to continue down the ridge until you are quite close to the river. The further downriver you go the easier it is to exit the woods onto the river bank. The rocky drop off at the river becomes quite a cliff if you go upstream. The other trailhead is well defined although it is narrow and may be hard to follow for beginning hikers. It begins a few yards up from the FS road pull-out. Park and walk up the road. Just before the second sign, yellow with black mark, you'll find the trailhead. The trail soon follows an old roadbed going left, look for the trail on your right to drop off this roadbed and go down the ridge. Both of these hikes are rather short, about 0.2 miles, a little steep, but easy. Notice on the map, Screaming Left Turn, this page, that these two trails simply go down opposite sides of the same cove. To get to Screaming Left Turn from the Highway 76 Bridge hike downstream, South Carolina side, along the river. There is a very vague trail and much of the hike can be done on the riverbank at low water but you are forced up into the woods several times. At about 0.2 miles downstream of the bridge you'll find a nice little rockhouse or grotto with a cleared area, candles and a well constructed fire ring. Written in charcoal on the rock wall are the words "Little Chimney". The river along this section is very scenic with rocks and small sandy beaches. My GPS recorded a hike of over one mile only because of my frequent forays up into the woods. The actual hiking distance is just over 0.6 miles at low water.



Screaming Left Turn



Bull Sluice and Woodall Shoals Area



## Reedy Branch Falls (Burson Falls), Burson Pond maps page 44, 46

Burson Pond or Lake takes its name from the former owners of the property. From the Highway 76 bridge go east about 1.7 miles to a pull-out on the right (N34 48.518 W83 16.892). A stone-bordered gate is visible here. The road, FS 2751, leads to a nice waterfall and a 13 acre lake. From the parking area hike a hundred yards or so down FS 2751 to where Reedy Branch goes beneath the road. Here a trail goes left only a few yards to the falls. Hike on about 0.3 miles to get to Burson Pond. The road follows the shoreline for about 0.3 miles to the dam area. Another trail leads to the dam area from Woodall Shoals Road, FS 757. See *Woodall Shoals Road*, page 47. From Orchard Road turn onto Woodall Shoals Road and go about 1 mile to a stone-bordered gate on the right, very small parking area (N34 47.683 W83 17.259). The trail from this gate is a narrow winding woodland trail; about 0.6 miles to the dam. Burson Pond has been one of our best Odonata viewing sites in the Chattooga watershed – at least 28 species recorded there. However, after the Forest Service drained the lake there has been a much reduced Odonata activity. It was reopened for fishing November 2014 and for some time now it does look like these dragonfly and damselfly populations are recovering.



Burson Pond. All that's left of the covered pier.



## Suttons Hole maps page 44, 46

(N34 48.035 W83 18.775). This is a camping area along the river, Georgia side, just upstream of Woodall Shoals. From the Highway 76 bridge go west about 0.3 miles to FS 290, a dirt road on the left. This road is known locally as Ham House Road. Go 0.4 miles and keep left (straight) onto FS 290A. Another 0.4 miles and the road ends in a small parking area. A steadily downhill, but not steep, trail on the right continues to the river, about 0.4 miles. A small stream, rich in wildflowers, joins the river here. Southeastern Expeditions uses this camping area for overnight rafting trips so you might find a whole host of people here on certain days.

## Rippy Branch\* maps page 41, 44, 46

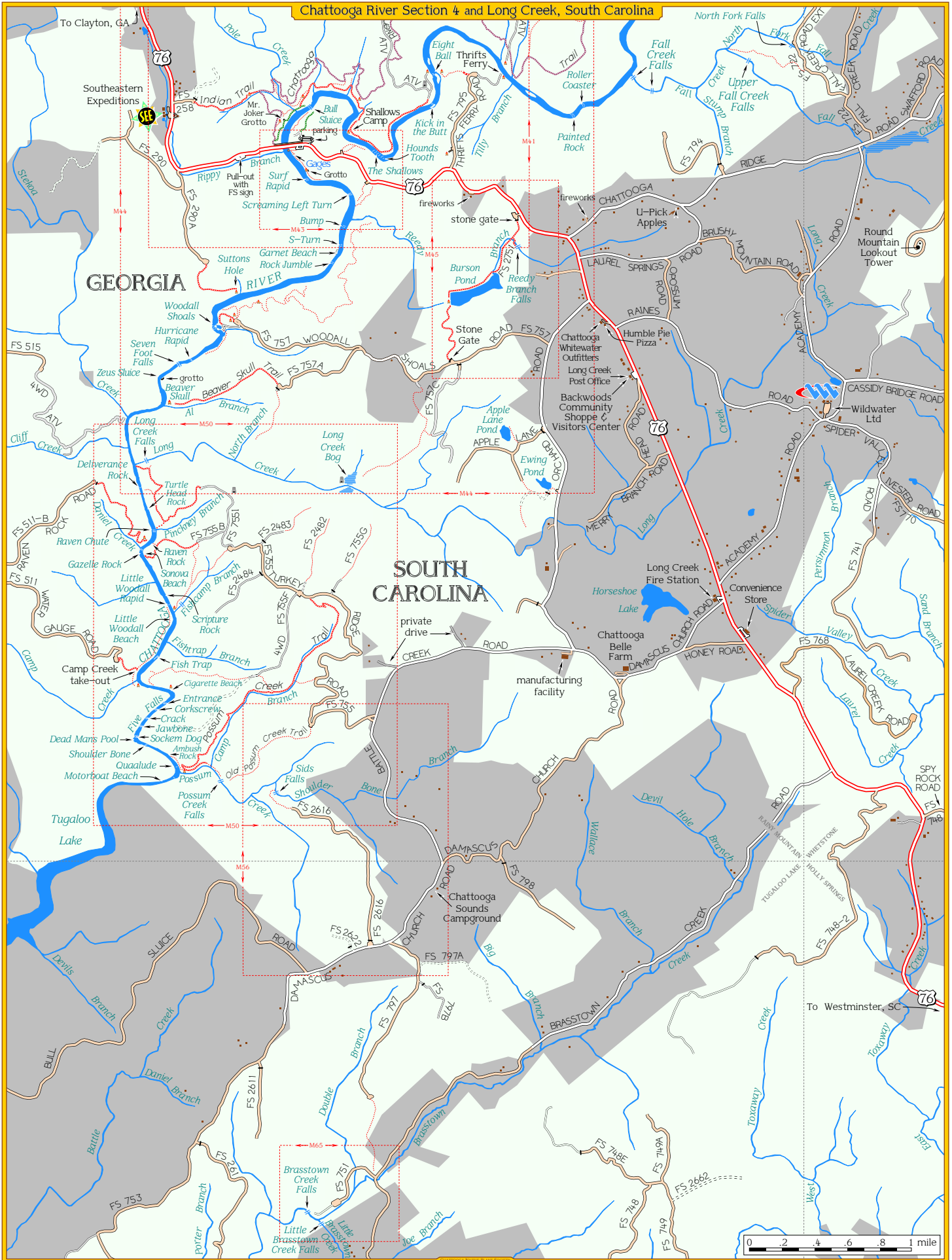
(N34 48.834 W83 18.417). Only for the wildflower enthusiast. This small stream is unnamed on maps. It flows alongside Highway 76 from above Southeastern Expeditions to the river on the southwest side of the bridge. The specific location in the plant list refers to the area along the stream from Ham House Road FS 290 to near the river. You can park at the Chattahoochee National Forest sign pull-out just west of the Highway 76 bridge. A surprisingly rich area with a great diversity of plants. Much of the flora can be seen without leaving the grassy area at the Forest Service sign. A few of the plant species recorded here –

*Adiantum pedatum*, Maiden-hair Fern  
*Albizia julibrissin*, Mimosa  
*Anemone quinquefolia*, Wood Anemone  
*Aralia spinosa*, Devil's Walking Stick  
*Arisaema triphyllum*, Jack-in-the-pulpit  
*Asplenium platyneuron*, Ebony Spleenwort  
*Bignonia capreolata*, Cross Vine  
*Botrychium virginiana*, Rattlesnake Fern  
*Campsis radicans*, Trumpet Vine  
*Cardamine flagellifera*, Blue Ridge Bitter Cress  
*Cardamine hirsuta*, Hairy Bitter Cress  
*Carex amphibola*, Narrow-leaved Sedge  
*Carex annectens*, Yellowfruit Sedge  
*Carex austro-caroliniana*, South Carolina Sedge  
*Carex nigromarginata*, Black-margined Sedge  
*Carex plantaginea*, Plantain Sedge  
*Chrysogonum virginianum*, Green-and-gold  
*Cicuta maculata*, Water Hemlock  
*Clematis virginiana*, Virgin's Bower  
*Decumaria barbara*, Climbing Hydrangea  
*Deparia acrostichoides*, Silvery Glade Fern  
*Dioscorea quaternata*, Wild Yam  
*Galax aphylla*, Galax

*Galearis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis  
*Galium aparine*, Catchweed Bedstraw  
*Galium triflorum*, Sweet-scented Bedstraw  
*Geranium maculatum*, Wild Geranium  
*Halesia tetraptera tetraptera*, Common Silver Bell  
*Hepatica acutiloba*, Sharp-lobed Hepatica  
*Hexastylus* sp.  
*Hydrangea arborescens*, Wild Hydrangea  
*Hydrangea radiata*, Silver-leaved Hydrangea  
*Impatiens capensis*, Jewel Weed  
*Maianthemum racemosum*, False Solomon's Seal  
*Medeola virginiana*, Indian Cucumber Root  
*Osmorhiza claytonii*, Sweet Cicely  
*Oxalis stricta*, Yellow Oxalis  
*Panax quinquefolium*, Ginseng  
*Parthenocissus quinquefolia*, Virginia Creeper  
*Phegopteris hexagonoptera*, Broad Beech Fern  
*Phlox divaricata*, Blue Phlox  
*Plantago rugelii*, American Plantain  
*Podophyllum peltatum*, Mandrake  
*Polygonatum biflorum*, Solomon's Seal  
*Polystichum acrostichoides*, Christmas Fern  
*Pyrularia pubera*, Buffalo Nut

*Ranunculus bulbosus*, Bulbous Buttercup  
*Ranunculus recurvatus*, Hooked Buttercup  
*Salvia lyrata*, Lyre-leaved Sage  
*Sanguinaria canadensis*, Blood Root  
*Stellaria pubera*, Giant Chick Weed  
*Anemone thalictroides*, Rue Anemone  
*Tiarella cordifolia*, Foam Flower  
*Persicaria virginiana*, Jumpseed  
*Trifolium repens*, White Clover  
*Trillium catesbaei*, Catesby's Trillium  
*Trillium cuneatum*, Toad Shade  
*Trillium vaseyi*, Vasey's Trillium  
*Triodanis perfoliata*, Venus' Looking-glass  
*Valerianella radiata*, Corn Salad  
*Viola blanda*, Sweet White Violet  
*Viola pubescens scabriuscula*, Smooth Yellow Violet  
*Viola hastata*, Halberd-leaved Violet  
*Viola sororia*, Common Blue Violet  
*Viola primulifolia*, Primrose-leaved Violet  
*Viola rotundifolia*, Round-leaved Yellow Violet  
*Viola tripartita*, Three-parted Violet  
*Xanthorhiza simplicissima*, Yellow Root

Chattooga River Section 4 and Long Creek, South Carolina



**Woodall Shoals Road** maps page 44, 46, 55

(N34 47.779 W83 16.669). From the Highway 76 bridge drive east about 2.7 miles and turn right onto Orchard Road (N34 48.002 W83 16.394). There's a small defunct business at this intersection. Go about 0.4 miles and turn right at the first road, Woodall Shoals Road FS 757. There is sometimes a street sign, Woodall Shoals Road, but it gets stolen so often it may or may not be there. The road is 2.3 miles long and ends at the Woodall Shoals parking area, information board and a chemical toilet.

**Beaver Skull** maps page 44, 46

Beaver Skull Road, FS 757A. (N34 47.462 W83 19.186). This is a calm stretch of river at the confluence of Al Branch and the river. You'll find sandy areas with driftwood as you go upstream to a little beach at the entrance rapid to the calm area. Beaver Skull is most easily reached by hiking along a well-developed trail from the parking area at the end of Beaver Skull Road (FS 757A). From the Highway 76 bridge go east about 2.7 miles and turn right onto Orchard Road. Go about 0.4 miles and turn right onto Woodall Shoals Road (FS 757). After 1.4 miles, shortly after the paved section of road, turn left onto FS 757A; this is Beaver Skull Road. It is 0.7 miles long, a parking area at the end. The trailhead is on the right, opposite the gated road. The Beaver Skull Trail or Al Branch Trail is about 0.9 miles long from the parking area to the campsite at the river. From 1,440 feet to about 1,080 feet, a drop of about 360 feet but easy walking. The stream-side trail is excellent for spring wildflowers. Sections of the trail are strewn with nice buckeyes in late October. From the campsite a sandy trail goes upstream to a small sand beach. Hiking upstream from here is easy on the rocks. You will shortly come to an overlook with a great panorama and photo-op of the **Seven Foot Falls** gorge, see next page. **Seven Foot Falls Grotto**, mentioned in the plant list, is in this river bend. Mountain Spleenwort, *Asplenium montanum*, has been recorded in this grotto, perhaps its lowest recorded occurrence in the Chattooga drainage. **Zeus Sluice** or **Zoo Sluice**, with a large jumping-off rock is also in this bend of the river.



Upper sandy beach overlooking Beaver Skull.

**North Branch\***. There's another hike/bushwhack from the end of Beaver Skull Road that may be of interest to wildflower enthusiasts. Hike beyond the metal road barrier on the right. You will pass through a large game opening. At the end of the opening there is a vague trail going down the ridge a short distance to a very small stream, North Branch. This rich cove is good for wildflowers and it's an easy bushwhack through open woods down to the confluence with Long Creek.

**Stekoa Creek**. (N34 47.382 W83 19.453). Stekoa Creek is mentioned here only because you can hike downstream from Beaver Skull to its confluence. If you look downstream from Beaver Skull you can see the rocky delta where Stekoa Creek enters the river. Not a simple bushwhack to get there. Cross the stream downstream of the Beaver Skull campsite and hike as far as practical along the river. Here you will (might) find a vague trail going up away from the river. It does turn into a very old logging road that skirts around the ridge. Look for a flat area along the river and bushwhack back down to the river. A short hike of only 0.3 miles. There is a trail on the Georgia side of the river that goes directly to a small beach at the confluence. See *Stekoa Creek* page 55 for more details.



Woodall Shoals Rapid

**Woodall Shoals** maps page 44, 46, 55

(N34 47.890 W83 18.893). At the end of Woodall Shoals Road you will find a large parking area, information board and chemical toilet. This is a very popular place for campers, hikers, boaters, swimmers, picnickers, fishermen and commercial rafters. It is also good for wildflowers. Years ago loggers floated their logs down the river to various points where they could be hauled out and taken to mill. A large flat rock area at Woodall Shoals caused the river to spread out and become very shallow. This blocked the logs even at high water levels so a river right section of the rock slope was dynamited to reroute the river into a deeper channel. This also formed the

most dangerous rapid on the river, Woodall Shoals Rapid, class 6. Boats and swimmers can be held underwater by the swirling water. Despite the large number of visitors this is a great place to spend a summer day. Rafting companies put in and take out here so beware of buses on the road. Remember that the speed limit is 15 MPH. The main trail to the river is a wide path to the left of the information board. Other trails go north and west through the camping areas to nice spots upstream of Woodall Shoals Rapid. The trails and the entire area is surprisingly good for wildflowers. You can go down the main trail and explore a pool area, the rock slope and upstream beaches then return to the parking lot by one of the other trails. Although there is a wealth of wildflowers here some of them come and go when floods scour the rocks and remove all the soil from the rock crevices. The plant list below has some plants that have been recorded along Woodall Shoals Road and at the river in the Woodall Shoals area.

*Agalinis purpurea*, Purple Gerardia  
*Anemone thalictroides*, Rue Anemone  
*Apocynum androsaemifolium*, Ground Nut  
*Aureolaria laevigata*, Smooth False Fox Glove  
*Bignonia capreolata*, Cross Vine  
*Chrysogonum virginianum australe*, Green-and-gold  
*Chrysopsis mariana*, Maryland Golden Aster  
*Clitoria mariana*, Butterfly Pea  
*Collinsonia verticillata*, Whorled Horse Balm  
*Commelina communis*, Asiatic Dayflower  
*Cornus amomum*, Silky Dogwood  
*Dianthus armeria*, Deptford Pink  
*Erigeron pulchellus pulchellus*, Poor Robin's Plantain  
*Eryngium yuccifolium yuccifolium*, Rattlesnake Master  
*Eupatorium perfoliatum perfoliatum*, Boneset  
*Geranium maculatum*, Wild Geranium  
*Helenium autumnale autumnale*, Sneezeweed

*Helenium flexuosum*, Purple-headed Sneezeweed  
*Ilex verticillata*, Winter Berry  
*Iris verna smalliana*, Dwarf Iris  
*Lindernia dubia dubia*, False Pimpernel  
*Liquidambar styraciflua*, Sweetgum  
*Lobelia amoena*, Lobelia  
*Lobelia cardinalis*, Cardinal Flower  
*Ludwigia decurrens*, Primrose Willow  
*Lycopus virginicus*, Bugle Weed  
*Lysimachia fraseri*, Fraser's Loosetrife  
*Lysimachia lanceolata*, Lance-leaved Loosetrife  
*Magnolia acuminata*, Cucumber Tree  
*Mimosa microphylla*, Eastern Sensitive Briar  
*Mimulus ringens ringens*, Monkey Flower  
*Murdannia keisak*, Marsh Dewflower  
*Panax quinquefolium*, Ginseng  
*Persicaria sagittatum*, Arrow-leaved Tearthumb

*Platanus occidentalis*, Sycamore  
*Polygala paucifolia*, Fringed Polygala  
*Rhexia virginica virginica*, Virginia Meadow Beauty  
*Rudbeckia hirta*, Black-eyed Susan  
*Sagittaria latifolia pubescens*, Broad-leaved Arrowhead  
*Salvia lyrata*, Lyre-leaved Sage  
*Spiranthes cernua*, Nodding Ladies' Tresses  
*Spiranthes ovalis erostellata*, October Ladies' Tresses  
*Stellaria pubera*, Giant Chick Weed  
*Stenanthium gramineum*, Featherbells  
*Trichostema dichotomum*, Forked Blue Curly  
*Trillium cuneatum*, Toadshade  
*Verbesina occidentalis*, Crown Beard  
*Viola hastata*, Halberd-leaved Violet  
*Viola walteri*, Prostrate Blue Violet  
*Xyris torta*, Twisted Yellow-eyed Grass



Seven Foot Falls

### Seven Foot Falls maps page 44, 46

(N34 47.660 W83 19.121). This scenic place on the river is reached by hiking downriver from Woodall Shoals. It is a class 4 rapid/waterfall about 0.5 miles downstream of Woodall Shoals. Hike down the main trail from the Woodall Shoals parking lot. Rafting companies and boaters launch at a large pool area downstream of the main Woodall Shoals rapid. As you near the launch area you will notice a trail that goes left and crosses a small stream. This trail eventually goes downward and stays close to the river. Once you drop down to the river the trail becomes more of a path of least resistance. The rocks can be slippery in wet weather and high water levels may keep you from hiking here at all but this is a wonderful little hike in dry conditions. The path eventually rises up onto large riverside boulders near **Hurricane Rapid**, (N34 47.674 W83 19.057), class 3, the first rapid boaters come to when they launch at Woodall Shoals. Seven Foot Falls is in a sharp left turn only 200 yards downstream. Photographers from the rafting companies take pictures here. They station themselves at convenient spots directly in front of and above the falls. You can also (maybe) get to Seven Foot Falls by hiking upstream from Beaver Skull. This approach from downstream affords a great view and photo opportunity from atop large rocks in a grotto area. Despite your closeness to the falls, hiking on upstream from here may not be easy. See *Beaver Skull*, page 47.

### Turkey Ridge Road maps page 46, 50, 51

FS 755. (N34 45.746 W83 17.866). This narrow winding dirt road is 2.9 miles long. There are two very popular waterfalls off this road; Possum Creek Falls and Long Creek Falls. The wilderness area here borders Section 4 of the Chattooga River and several trails allow access to different places along this section. You will find visitors parked at these two trailheads almost any day the weather is good. Some not so good news. Recently, 2013, the Forest Service has been busily tagging trees and marking off areas to be cut. See the map, next page for directions. Remember that some road signs have been removed by vandals.



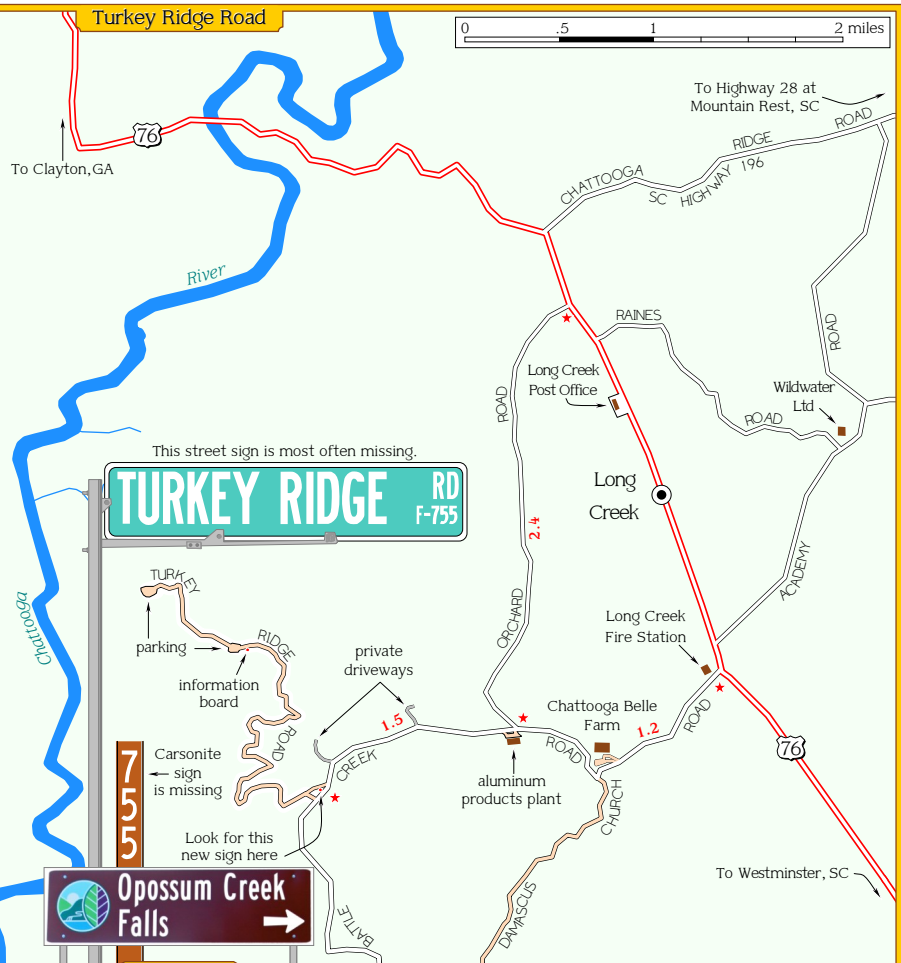
**Turkey Ridge Road** has several popular hiking trails to scenic places on section 4 of the Chattooga River. It is a dirt Forest Service Road, dead ends after about 2.9 miles. Notice on the map that it has two entrances where you will find a street sign and a Forest Service Carsonite sign. The street sign does get stolen sometimes so be aware of that. The Carsonite sign has the number 755. How do you get to Turkey Ridge Road?

**From Clayton, Georgia.**

At the traffic light near McDonald's drive east on U.S. Highway 76. At about 8.1 miles you will cross the Chattooga River and enter South Carolina. After 2.5 miles turn right onto Orchard Road. This is the first paved road on the right you come to in South Carolina. Orchard Road is 2.4 miles long and ends at Battle Creek Road. There's an aluminum products plant just across the road. Turn right and drive about 1.5 miles to Turkey Ridge Road, a dirt road on your right.

**From Westminster, South Carolina.**

Drive west on U.S. Highway 76 about 13.2 miles and turn left at the Long Creek fire station onto Damascus Church Road. After only 0.8 miles the paved portion of this road changes to Battle Creek Road. You will soon see an aluminum products plant on your left. Go another 1.5 miles and turn right onto Turkey Ridge Road.

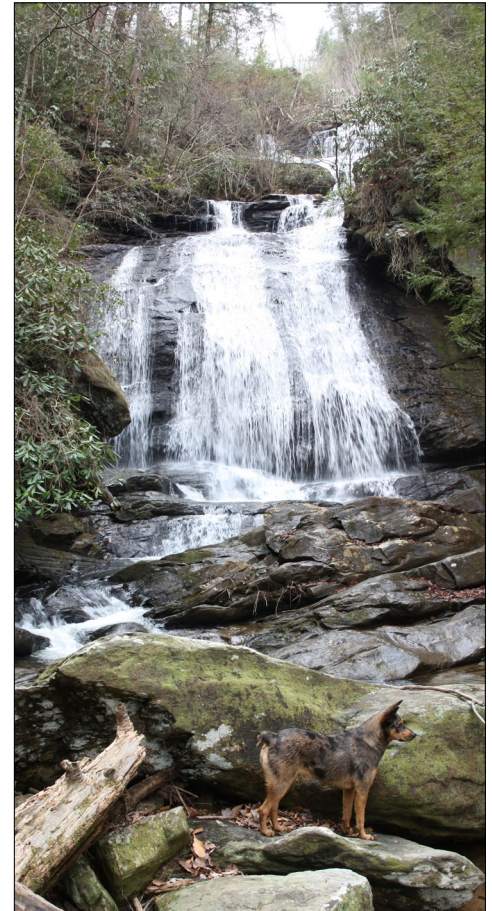


**Possum Creek and the Five Falls** *maps page 49, 50, 51*

(N34 45.460 W83 19.109). Possum Creek is on the South Carolina side; flows into the Chattooga River downstream of the Five Falls area. There are campsites and a nice sandy beach at the confluence. Rafting trips often stop here to have lunch. The amount of sandy beach area varies according to the water level. A short trail leads up to Possum Creek Falls. The "Opossum Creek Falls" sign shown on the above map, while helpful, does not help you find the Possum Creek Falls trailhead.

**Possum Creek Trails.** In the past there have been several trails leading to the confluence of Possum Creek and the Chattooga River. The trail known as Old Possum Creek Trail was completely obliterated by a tornado on March 27, 1994. Several efforts were made to restore it but failed because of the many downed trees and newly grown brambles and thickets. Old hiking guides and at least one new guide recommend this trail to get to Possum Creek Falls; don't believe it. Remember that this trail has not been restored and what remains ends well before reaching Possum Creek. To get to the falls from the end of this trail you will need to go steeply downward through very thick vegetation. To get to this trailhead turn off Battle Creek Road onto Turkey Ridge Road. There is a pull-out on the left at about 0.5 miles, you can't miss it. A recent check, December 2012, found this trail unusable. Hunters do use the beginning part of the trail.

**New Possum Creek Trail** (N34 46.410 W83 18.256). This is the Possum Creek Trail; about 2 miles long, easy 45 minute walk. It parallels Camp Branch for much of its length. Turn onto Turkey Ridge Road and drive about 2.1 miles to the trailhead parking area. This is a well used pull-out, both sides of the road, has a Forest Service Road FS 755F (4WD) going left; look close, Carsonite sign. To get to the trailhead park at this pull-out and walk back down the road a few yards; Carsonite signs and an information board mark the trailhead. The trail has a couple of switchbacks as it drops down into the Camp Branch cove; a good wildflower area. It then follows the ridges and coves down to a campsite at the confluence of Possum Creek and the Chattooga River. A trail from the campsite area leads up to **Possum Creek Falls**. It parallels Possum Creek upstream, river right, to the falls. An easy walk of about 0.3 miles. This little trail crosses Camp Branch, a tricky rock hop if the water is high or the rocks are wet. From the Possum Creek confluence you can also hike upriver to the **Five Falls**. While this trail is in spots well defined it completely disappears at several places along the way. The Five Falls is a very scenic area with five class 4 and 5 rapids; the Chattooga River's most challenging rapids.

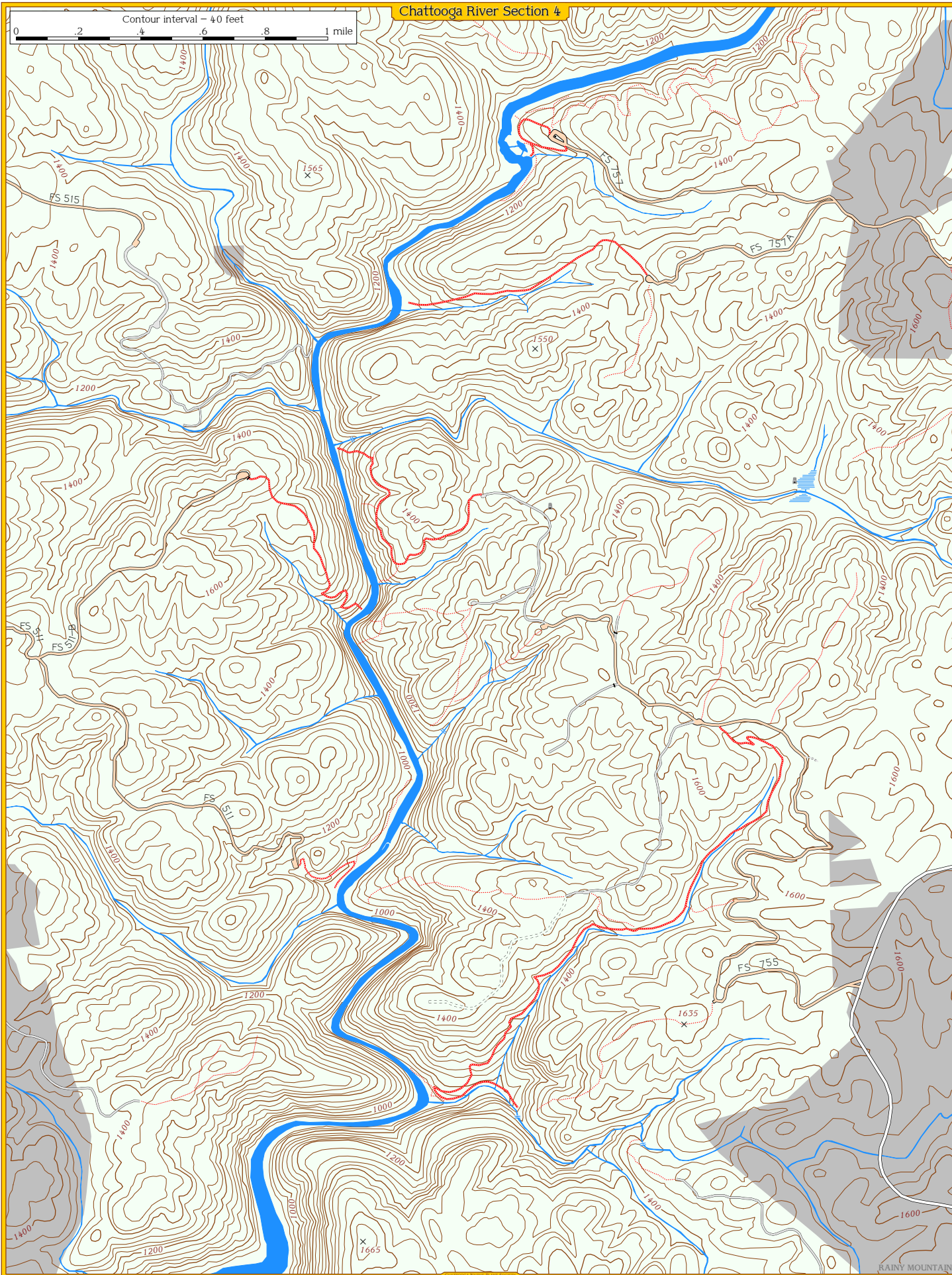


Possum Creek Falls



Chattooga River Section 4

Contour interval - 40 feet  
0 .2 .4 .6 .8 1 mile

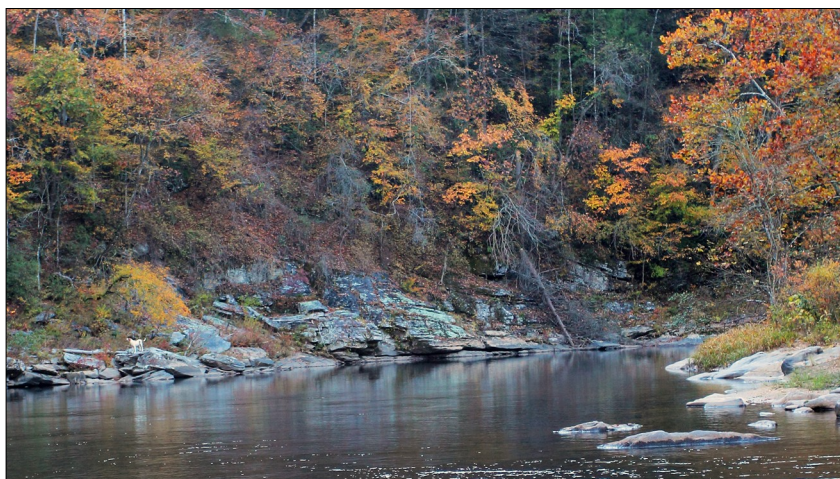


RAINY MOUNTAIN

There is a shortcut to the Possum Creek Trail that shortens the hike to the river from 2.1 miles to 1.4 miles. The small trailhead pull-out is in a right turn about 0.6 miles after the Old Possum Creek Trail pull-out. You'll find a Carsonite sign with a reflector (reflector now missing) on the right side of the road opposite the pull-out (N34 45.967 W83 18.178). This is the only Carsonite sign along the edge of Turkey Ridge Road. This little shortcut has become well used, only 0.2 miles down to the Possum Creek Trail. Notice on the map how it goes left then down the ridge and across Camp Branch. Remember this Possum Creek Trail intersection if you hike on down to the river; coming back up it is easy to miss.

### **Cigarette Beach** *maps page 46, 50*

(N34 45.908 W83 19.238). Said to be the last place to stop for a cigarette before entering the Five Falls Gorge. This is a nice sandy beach, river left approximately 200 yards downstream of the Camp Creek/Chattooga River confluence. From the Possum Creek Trail parking area hike FS 755F. This road is well used by 4-wheelers. It ends in a large flat saddle at about 0.7 miles. Here the remains of an old logging road continue slightly left to the end of a ridge. The Cigarette Beach Trail is on the right, follows an old logging road or skidder trail and is fairly well defined despite the numerous windfalls. The last 0.2 miles drops down to the left to a large rock strewn area along the river. Cigarette Beach is a few yards downstream. The hike from the parking area to the beach is about 1.5 miles. See below for more info.



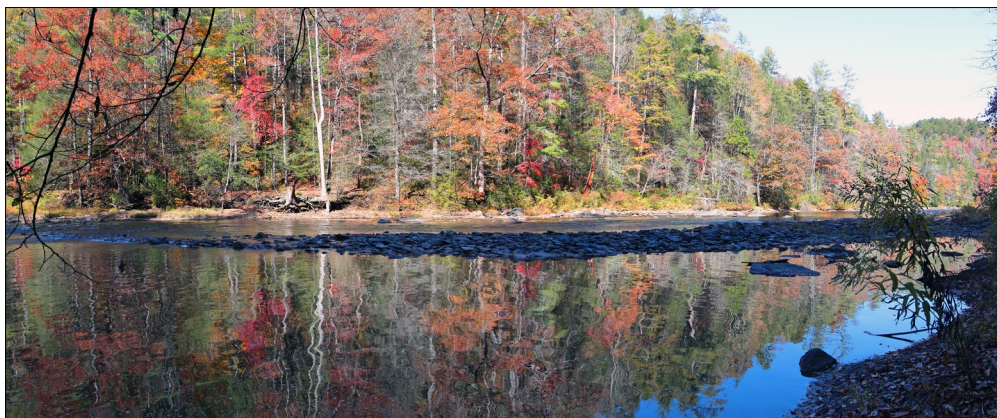
*View looking downstream from Cigarette Beach. Five Falls is just around the bend.*

### **Fishtrap Branch\*** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 46.151 W83 19.193). This is for the hard core botanist/naturalist/bushwhacker. This is a small stream from a complex watershed north of the old road FS 755F. This watershed area is rich in plant life. The upper part is easy to get around in. The lower part closer to the river is heavily vegetated with numerous small waterfalls and is more easily hiked by walking in the stream itself, still quite a bushwhack. The lower part is also most easily reached from the river. To get to the upper drainage follow FS 755F and drop off to the right. Another more direct route to the very top of the drainage is to park at FS 2484 (N34 46.507 W83 18.545). This is a closed Forest Service road about 0.3 miles beyond FS 755F. Walk only a short distance down FS 2484 and the upper Fishtrap Branch drainage will be on your left. If you walk through the wildlife openings you can follow a long ridge top all the way down to the river to a spot upstream of the confluence. It is a bushwhack of about 0.8 miles, mostly open forest, steep with thick vegetation near the river. The easiest way to get to the confluence is to hike the riverbank upstream from Cigarette Beach, about 0.3 miles. A loop hike I've enjoyed a couple of times now is to hike from Cigarette Beach up the river to **Fishcamp Branch** (page 54). The riverside part of the hike is quite easy at low water, about 0.6 miles. Take the Fishcamp Branch Trail out to Turkey Ridge Road. Total loop hike is about 3.5 miles.

### **Fish Trap** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 46.119 W83 19.229). The Fish Trap, about 100 yards downstream of Fishtrap Branch, is a long ridge of rocks in the river believed to be the remains of an ancient fish trap constructed by Indians. The confluence of Fishtrap Branch is very small and well hidden from view, partially underground and in a narrow ditch. The river here looks to be good habitat for Edmond's Snaketail and other dragonflies. A fieldtrip here in late April to mid May could be very worthwhile. See *Fishtrap Branch* above.



*Fishtrap*

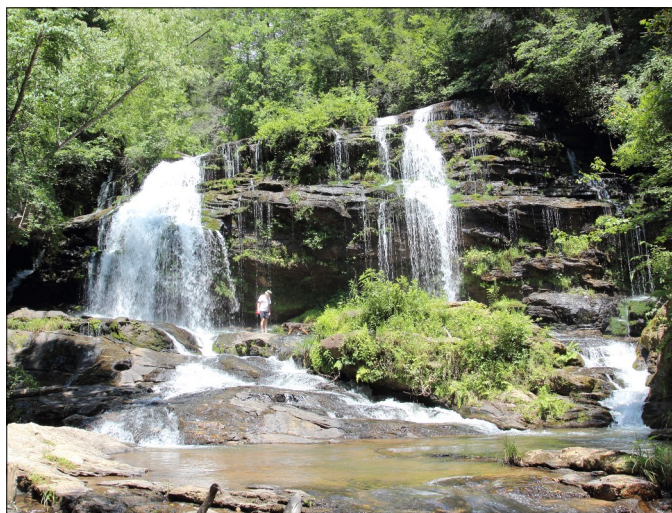
### **Long Creek Bog\*** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 47.064 W83 17.957). Before we leave the Possum Creek Trailhead parking area we need to discuss Long Creek Bog, another area that might interest the naturalist. Once a lush beaver pond, this bog is becoming extinct. The stream has cut into the ground and become sharply defined leaving the surrounding flat area high and dry. There is no evidence that beavers are still utilizing this area although a few very small shallow pools remain, inches deep. You will need to wade across Long Creek to get to wet areas that are on both sides of the stream. Although it can be reached by hiking south from Woodall Shoals road it is most easily reached by hiking north from Turkey Ridge Road. Easily missed is an old logging road, FS 2482, that goes north directly from the Possum Creek Trailhead parking area. It is somewhat hidden by small pines right where the cars park on the north side of the road. Hike this trail to the end of the ridge where you will need to bushwhack steeply down to Long Creek. Boots are recommended for this muddy area if you intend to explore it. The trail from Woodall Shoals Road is shown on the Chattooga River Section 4 and Long Creek, South Carolina Map, page 46. The Forest Service has placed large boulders at the old trailhead on Woodall Shoals Road. This old logging road goes from Woodall Shoals Road down the middle of the ridge toward Long Creek but is now very obscure in many places. If you bear right as the ridge goes downward you will come to Long Creek Bog. A short trail is shown linking this trail with FS 757C. This trail is, for the most part, non-existent. It mostly indicates that it is a short hop to go to the Long Creek Bog trail from FS 757C, woods are fairly open here. This bog could still be of interest to botanists and perhaps dragonfly enthusiasts. It's very doubtful that the Wood Duck nesting boxes here will be of any use to Wood Ducks. There are at least two old chimney remains on the western side of the northern bog.

**Back to Turkey Ridge Road.** At the end of the road you'll find a parking area and a 4-wheel drive Forest Service Road FS 755I angling off to the right. Park here for hikes to Long Creek Falls, Raven Chute, the top of Raven Rock, Sonova Beach, Fishcamp Branch, Scripture Rock and Little Woodall.

### Long Creek Falls *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 47.129 W83 19.381). This is one of our most beautiful waterfalls. It is about 30 feet high and 200 feet from the confluence with the river. Boaters and rafters often stop here to lunch and have their pictures taken with the falls. Be careful of the slippery rocks when exploring the crevices and ledges beneath the falls. Park at the end of Turkey Ridge Road and hike about 0.7 miles to the end of FS 755I, a 4-wheel drive road. The trailhead is to the right of the large mud puddle. The trail, at first, follows a small clay gully but soon opens up onto a long abandoned logging road on the left side of a ridge. The trail is quite level, easy to walk. There is only one fork in the trail. The fork (N34 46.838 W83 19.185) is about 0.5 miles from the trailhead and is the first place the noise of the river can easily be heard. Go right. That left fork, usually blocked with branches, goes down to **Raven Chute**. Another 0.6 miles at the end of the trail you will find a short, well defined, but very steep trail going left down to the river. You will have to wade across Long Creek for the best views and picnic spots. The hike from the parking area at the end of FS 755 to the falls is about 1.8 miles one way.



*Long Creek Falls*

### Raven Rock and Raven Chute *maps page 46, 50, 51, 55*

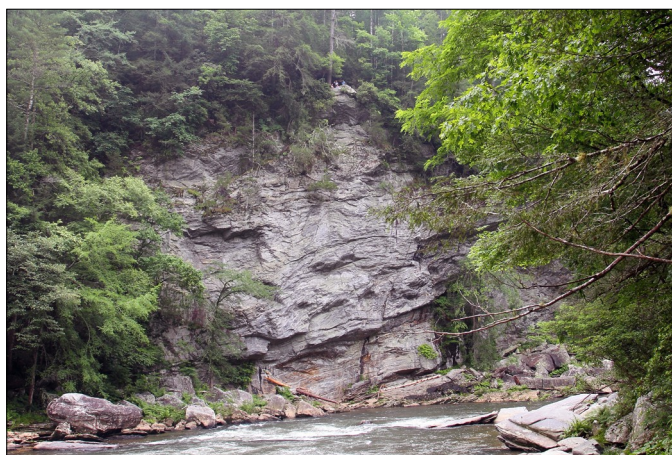
(N34 46.702 W83 19.276). Also called Raven Cliff and Raven Rock Cliff. There are several Raven Cliffs and places with similar names in our area. The Raven Rock in this list is a cliff area about 0.5 miles downstream of the Long Creek confluence with the Chattooga River. It is a 200 foot rock face on the left river bank with a class 4 rapid, Raven Rock Rapid or Raven Chute. There are three hikes to this area: 1. Raven Chute Rapid at the bottom of Raven Rock. 2. Top of Raven Rock. 3. Hike to the river on the Georgia side. The Georgia side hike is covered in the *Water Gauge Road* section, bottom of page 55.

To get to **Raven Chute** follow the directions given for Long Creek Falls only go left at the fork in the trail (N34 46.838 W83 19.185). This fork in the trail is about 0.5 miles along the Long Creek Falls Trail and is the first place the noise of the river can easily be heard. This trail going left, often blocked, is easy to miss. Several small flat rocks mark the trailhead. One of the rocks is about a foot long and resembles a footprint. It has the word "WAY" scratched into it. The trail itself is well defined and a little more than 0.1 mile down to the river. It follows the ridge top downward and becomes increasingly steep, actually vertical, as it gets close to the river. Going downward here looks difficult or maybe impossible for some. In reality it's a fun hike. You will have to hold onto the vegetation (roots and limbs) to continue sharply downward. A rope is handy here; loop it around a tree and walk it down the steep places. At the river, a tiny stream, Pinckney Branch, flows across the rocks and enters the river at Raven Chute. You can hike on the rocks to the cliff area. Logs sometimes accumulate here after high water. If disturbed they can come crashing down, be careful walking around or over them. Another caution: there are extremely large and prolific Poison Ivy vines growing at the base of the cliff and on many of the rocks.



*View of Raven Chute from the top of Raven Rock.*

**Top of the Rock.** Hiking to the top of the rock from the river isn't recommended. It is very steep and the soil in this area is easily disturbed. It is best to hike the trail from the end of FS 755B (N34 46.714 W83 18.990). Hike FS 755I less than 0.1 mile and go left onto FS 755B. This short FS road is only a couple of minutes walking to the end. The trailhead is on the left of the clearing. The trail is fairly steep downward, levels out in a couple of places and at a level place among tall pines (N34 46.679 W83 19.251) a path goes to the right and then sharply downward. This final section of trail is very steep but easy and only a couple of minutes. Be careful here; the trail appears to continue right over the cliff but hooks sharply to the left. Hold on to the tree limbs to climb down then go right and down again to an overhang on the cliff face; sounds tough but very easy. This is a perfect little observation platform facing slightly upriver overlooking Raven Chute.



*Visitors at the top of Raven Rock (look closely).*

This is a rewarding hike with a great view but could be very dangerous for children or pets. Climbers sometimes rappel from this spot. Walking along the base of the cliff you can see a karabiner or two attached to the cliff face. This is possibly the shortest hike into section 4, only 0.7 miles from the parking area at the end of Turkey Ridge Road. You can see on the Turkey Ridge Road Map that this trail goes down to **Sonova Beach** with a short spur trail going off to the right down to the top of Raven Rock. *See next.*

### **Sonova Beach** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 46.611 W83 19.325). This is a small but beautiful beach about 0.4 miles downstream of Raven Rock. To get to the Sonova Beach Trailhead park at the end of Turkey Ridge Road and hike to the end of FS 755B, about 0.3 miles. You'll see a tank trap and the trailhead on the left. This trail, about 0.5 miles, is mostly downhill, couple of flat stretches, gets steep just as it reaches the river, but easy in dry weather. A total hike from the parking area to the river of only 0.8 miles. Gazelle Rock is just across the river from the beach. This rock, for years, had a log sticking out of its 'mouth' and was called Smoking Gazelle Rock by raft guides. Hiking upstream from Sonova Beach to Raven Rock is easy at low water but the path is quite obscure. You will come to a place where you need to jump across about 4 feet of water to get to the cliff area. If you wish to bypass this obstacle, backup and try to find a way upward through the thick vegetation. There is a passageway but may be difficult to find without help. The trail actually goes beneath a log and up to the cliff, less than 20 yards, easy. *See next.*



*Sonova Beach. Gazelle Rock on the opposite bank.*

**Raven Chute to Sonova Beach Loop Hike.** There's a nice loop hike that includes a tour of Raven Rock. Walking at a casual pace with short stops the hike can take as little as 1¾ hours, longer if you include a visit to the top of the rock. From the Long Creek Falls Trail hike down the Raven Chute Trail and go downstream beneath the cliff. Near the end of the cliff you will go upward and away from the river. As the trail starts to go into the woods and close to the cliff, look down to the right. You will see that the trail actually goes steeply down beneath a log. Sit down to go beneath the log, easier than it looks, and then follow a vague trail on downstream to Sonova Beach. You can hike out the Sonova Beach Trail stopping on the way to visit the top of the rock. If you are new to Sonova Beach you may have trouble finding the trail out. Go downriver a few yards and you will see a steep bare dirt trail going upward. As the trail levels out amid tall pines look for the trail on the left that goes down to the top of Raven Rock. *See Top of the Rock previous page.*



*Deliverance Rock*

### **Deliverance Rock** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

(N34 46.986 W83 19.370). A large flat-topped rock in the Chattooga River about 0.2 miles downstream of the Long Creek confluence and about 0.5 miles upstream of Raven Rock. Deliverance Rapid, class 3, is river left of the rock. Film crews set up equipment on top of this rock to film parts of the movie Deliverance. It is said that some expensive equipment was lost to the river here. The easiest hike to Deliverance is along the riverbank from Raven Chute, about 0.3 miles. Hiking downstream from Long Creek is shorter, about 0.2 miles, but the riverbank here is less hiker friendly due to vegetation. There is an old trail that never reached Deliverance but started in that direction before giving way to the vegetation. It's located at N34 46.949 W83 19.279 on the Long Creek Falls Trail. Look carefully along the trail and you can still find this old trailhead; only 0.1 mile down to Deliverance. Hikers, including me, often pile limbs here to block this poor excuse for a trail as it often confuses people hiking to Long Creek Falls.

### **Fishcamp Branch** *maps page 46, 50, 51*

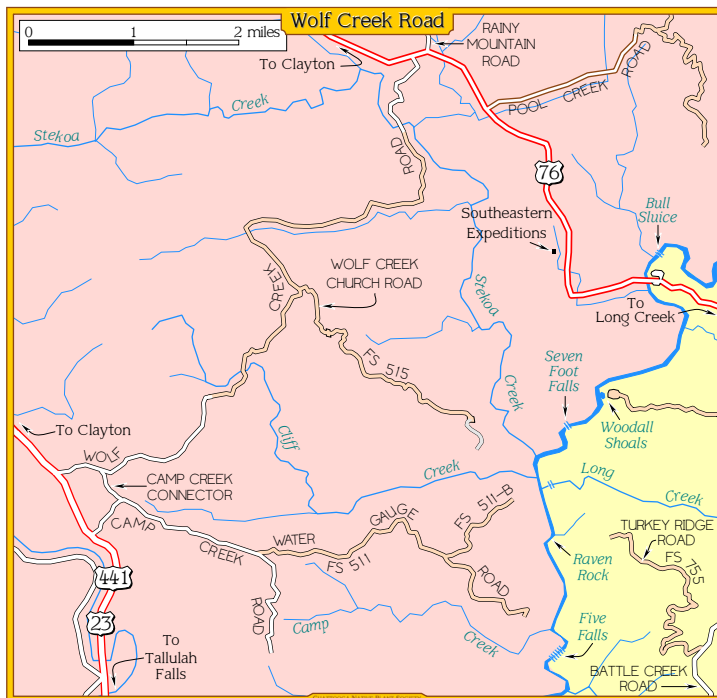
(N34 46.330 W83 19.147). This tiny branch is named for a well used fishing campsite at the river. It does have a nice, although very small, waterfall, N34 46.361 W83 19.107. A very good trail descends along a ridge from the end of FS 755B. This trail begins just to the left of the Forest Service sign at the beginning of the Sonova Beach Trail. It starts out very vague but after only a few feet turns into a well defined trail. It goes down the top of the ridge but soon drops off to the left side of the ridge. Near the end of the trail you will hear Fishcamp Branch Falls and the river. You will need to scoot down a steep area and follow the branch to the river. Little Woodall Beach is directly across the river and Little Woodall Rapid only a few yards upstream. The hike from the end of FS 755B to Fishcamp is about 0.6 miles. The hike from Fishcamp Branch down to **Fish Trap** is quite easy at normal water levels, about 0.4 miles.

## Scripture Rock maps page 46, 50, 51

(N34 46.447 W83 19.238). Two rocks along the river, river left, have chiseled scriptures, names and dates said to have been done in the 40s. There are supposedly three scripture rocks, all within a few feet of each other; I've only found two. The inscriptions are quite eroded and can be easily overlooked. One rock has the words "God is Love", beneath that a cross then at least four names and dates. The names and dates are difficult to read but could probably be determined with a little work. While one date is almost certainly 1940, the date at the very bottom is clearly 1983. The other rock has a short scripture taken from Isaiah 55:6 "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found". Not a difficult hike upstream from the campsite at Fishcamp Branch, about 240 yards. Hiking downstream from Sonova Beach is a much longer, more difficult hike. See *Fishcamp Branch page 54*.

## Wolf Creek Road and Water Gauge Road map →

Wilderness areas along Section 4 of the Chattooga River on the Georgia side of the river can be accessed from these roads. Wolf Creek Road, about 7.9 miles long, goes southwest from Highway 76 to Highway 441/23 just north of Tallulah Falls. It is paved for a mile on the northern end and 2 miles on the southern end. Wolf Creek Road is on the left (N34 50.693 W83 20.690) about 4.0 miles west of the Highway 76 bridge. This road is easy to miss. It's on a left turn in the highway just beyond Rainey Mountain Road, a paved road on the right. To get to Wolf Creek Road at Highway 441; from Clayton go south on Highway 441 about 7.4 miles and turn left onto Wolf Creek Road (N34 47.397 W83 24.457). Camp Creek Road is another mile south. The Camp Creek Connector, only ¼ mile long, connects the two roads. It goes through a small community, drive slow. Water Gauge Road FS 511 is 4 miles long, dirt, a little rough in spots but easily drivable in an ordinary car. From the Camp Creek Connector drive 1.3 miles on Camp Creek Road and turn left onto Water Gauge Road. The road is well marked but almost looks like a driveway, passes right in front of a house. Further along there is one more residence on the right, wilderness from there on. There's a parking area and information board at the end.



## Stekoa Creek maps page 33, 46, 55

(N34 47.382 W83 19.453). This is a major tributary of the Chattooga River on section 4. It begins in Mountain City and roughly parallels Highway 441 southward through Clayton to just below Tiger. It then turns east, then south to enter the Chattooga, river right, about 0.3 miles downstream of Beaver Skull. If you look downstream from Beaver Skull you can see it's confluence. An illegal ATV trail on the Georgia side of the river leads to a small beach at this confluence. From Highway 76 turn onto Wolf Creek Road and drive 4.5 miles to Wolf Creek Church Road (N34 48.742 W83 21.808) on the left. A sign advertizes the church at this intersection. Drive about 0.6 miles and bear left at the church. A sign here, within sight of the church, marks the beginning of FS 515. There's a parking area after about 2.1 miles. This first section of road is in good shape, easy for an ordinary car. If you have 4-wheel drive or feel comfortable in a 2-wheel drive with high ground clearance you can go another 0.4 miles to the end of the road. From this point an ATV trail leads all the way to the river at Stekoa Creek. This is an easy hike, steep near the river but still easy. At about 0.5 miles there is a side trail, a little over 100 yards, that goes down to **Cliff Creek**. Total hiking distance from the end of FS 515 to the river is 1.0 mile and about 1.4 miles from the 2-wheel drive car parking area.

## Camp Creek maps page 46, 50, 51, 55

(N34 45.960 W83 19.388). There are a number of creeks in our area with this name. The Camp Creek in this list enters the Chattooga River on the Georgia side just upstream of the Five Falls area. It is a long drive but a relatively short hike. Drive to the end of Water Gauge Road to a parking area with an information board. Rafting company buses park here at certain water levels so pay attention to where you park. A short winding downhill trail, about 0.3 miles, leads down to the river a few yards upstream of the Camp Creek confluence. There are a number of campsites along the river here. In the past there was a trail that went downriver to the Five Falls. It was never a well defined trail and there are different opinions about whether this trail is easy or difficult, well or ill defined or even exists. If you are into exploring you might try this old route to the Five Falls. **Little Woodall**. A very well defined, virtually level trail goes upriver. Hiking about 0.3 miles upriver from the Camp Creek take-out takes you to a beautiful sand and rock beach area on a bend in the river known as Little Woodall Beach. The trail continues upstream for 0.2 miles and ends at Little Woodall Rapid, class 3.



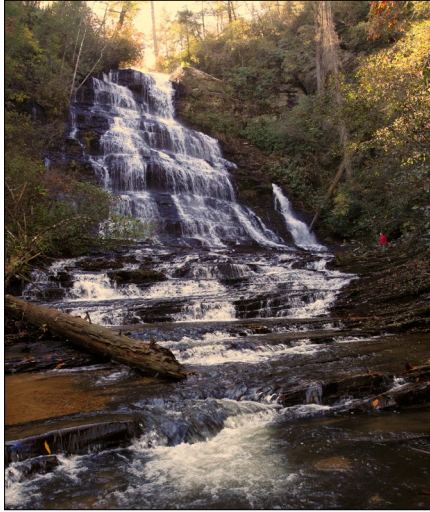
Little Woodall Rapid

## Raven Rock on the Georgia side of the River maps page 46, 50, 51, 55

Drive about 2.6 miles on Water Gauge Road and turn left onto Forest Service Road 511-B (N34 46.570 W83 20.329). A Carsonite sign marks the road. It's also known as Raven Rock Road, about a mile long, easy to drive in an ordinary car. Park at the small clearing at the end of the road. The trailhead to Raven Rock is on the right, a metal Forest Service barrier blocking the trail. The trail is 0.8 miles long and is fairly level across the top of the ridge. The trail forks at one point but soon the two trails merge back together. It then goes down the ridge through several switchbacks to a large camping area near the river. A short trail from the campsite goes down a few yards to a small beach directly across the river from Raven Rock.

**Sids Falls** maps page 46, 50, 51 and right →

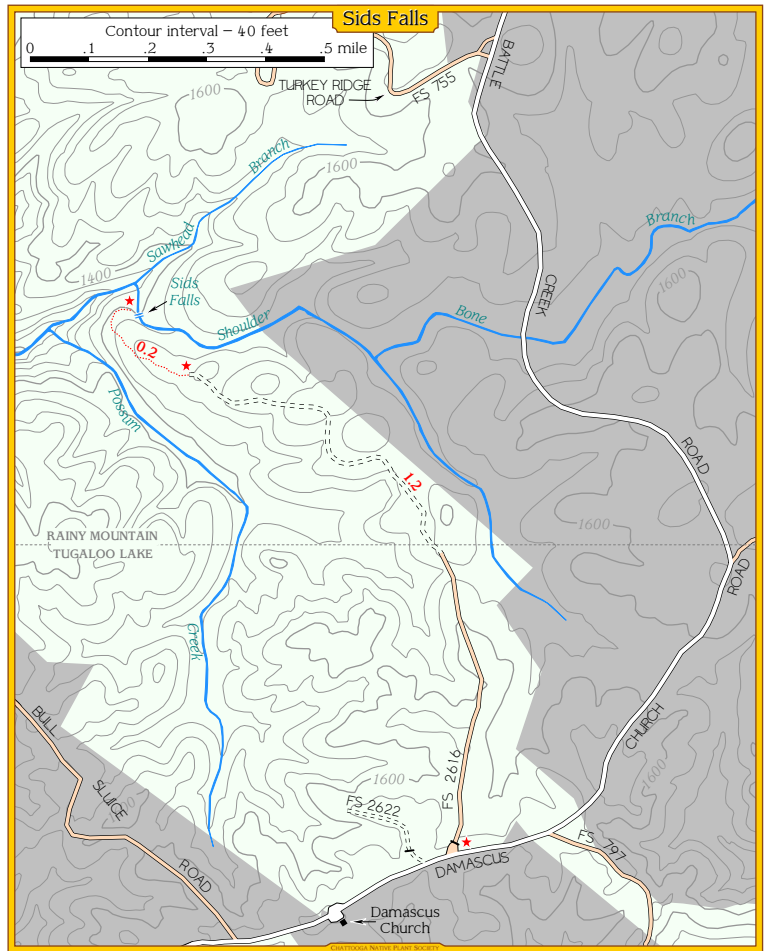
(N34 45.367 W83 18.467). This beautiful waterfall on Shoulder Bone Branch was named after Sidney Ballenger, a Walhalla school teacher who endeavored to document the natural wonders of the area. Sids Falls is only 0.35 miles, as the crow flies, from Possum Creek Falls. However, bushwhacking from Possum Creek Falls or Turkey Ridge Road to Sids Falls would be a terrible mistake. The streams here are in deep, steep walled coves that are covered in extremely thick vegetation. The trailhead to Sids Falls is off Damascus Church Road. See the Long Creek Map on page 46. At the point



Sid Ballenger Falls

where Battle Creek Road re-joins Damascus Church Road drive about 0.8 miles and look for a gated pull-out on the right. This is FS 2616, has a Forest Service metal gate. The hike is about 1.4 miles; a wide grass covered road with several large game openings (open fields) then a wooded trail down to the falls. The first game opening will be on your left,

keep right. The hike along this road and through the game openings is flat, tall grass, easy walking. At the end of the last opening a vague trail goes to the end of the ridge then steeply downward to the base of the falls. Despite the very steep ending to this trail it is surprisingly easy. Holding on to limbs makes it almost stair-like when descending or climbing out. Some hikers believe the Forest Service removes trail flagging and obliterates this trail to discourage hikers from visiting this waterfall because they have developed the area for use by hunters. Despite this, enthusiastic hikers interested in trail maintenance are trying to better define this woodland section of the trail, only 0.2 miles long..



**Bull Sluice Road and Tugaloo Lake** maps page 46, 50, 51

The Chattooga River empties into **Tugaloo Lake**, a reservoir created for hydroelectric power just after World War I. The lake is totally surrounded by wilderness area, all accessible to the public. The land is owned by Georgia Power Company or is within the National Forest. There are no houses on the lake and motorboats must have motors less than 20 horsepower. The lake is about 4.2 miles long, from just downstream of Possum Creek to the dam. There are several well established campsites around the lake. In Georgia a road from the town of Tallulah Falls leads to the dam. In South Carolina **Bull Sluice Road** is the only access road to the lake. Many people call this the Lake Road and on some maps it is labeled Tugaloo Lake Road. The road goes to a public boat ramp simply known by most locals as the Lake Landing (N34 44.204 W83 20.745). This is the takeout point for section 4 boaters and commercial rafting companies. It is said that before the river was dammed there was a Bull Sluice rapid along this section, hence the name Bull Sluice Road. It is a well traveled dirt road 4.1 miles long; the last 0.7 miles is paved and very steep. The paved portion of this road should never be driven when it is icy. On Damascus Church Road, Bull Sluice Road is the first road on the right just beyond the church. Drive with caution; boaters and rafting company buses use this road quite a lot in the summer months. For the wildflower enthusiast *Hibiscus moscheutos palustris*, Swamp Rose Mallow can be found on at least one small island in the upper part of the lake. the only known occurrence in our area. Two more species are worth mentioning. The Tallulah River enters the lake from the west leaving the lower part Tallulah Gorge underwater. When you boat up into **lower Tallulah Gorge** you will find cliffs on the right. The woods bordering these cliffs have a rare fern for our area, *Cheilanthes lanosa*, Hairy Lip Fern. Another rare plant for our area, *Drosera rotundifolia rotundifolia*, Round-leaved Sundew, can be found on seepage areas of some of the small cliffs around the Tallulah Gorge power plant..

**Tallulah Gorge** map page 8 A4

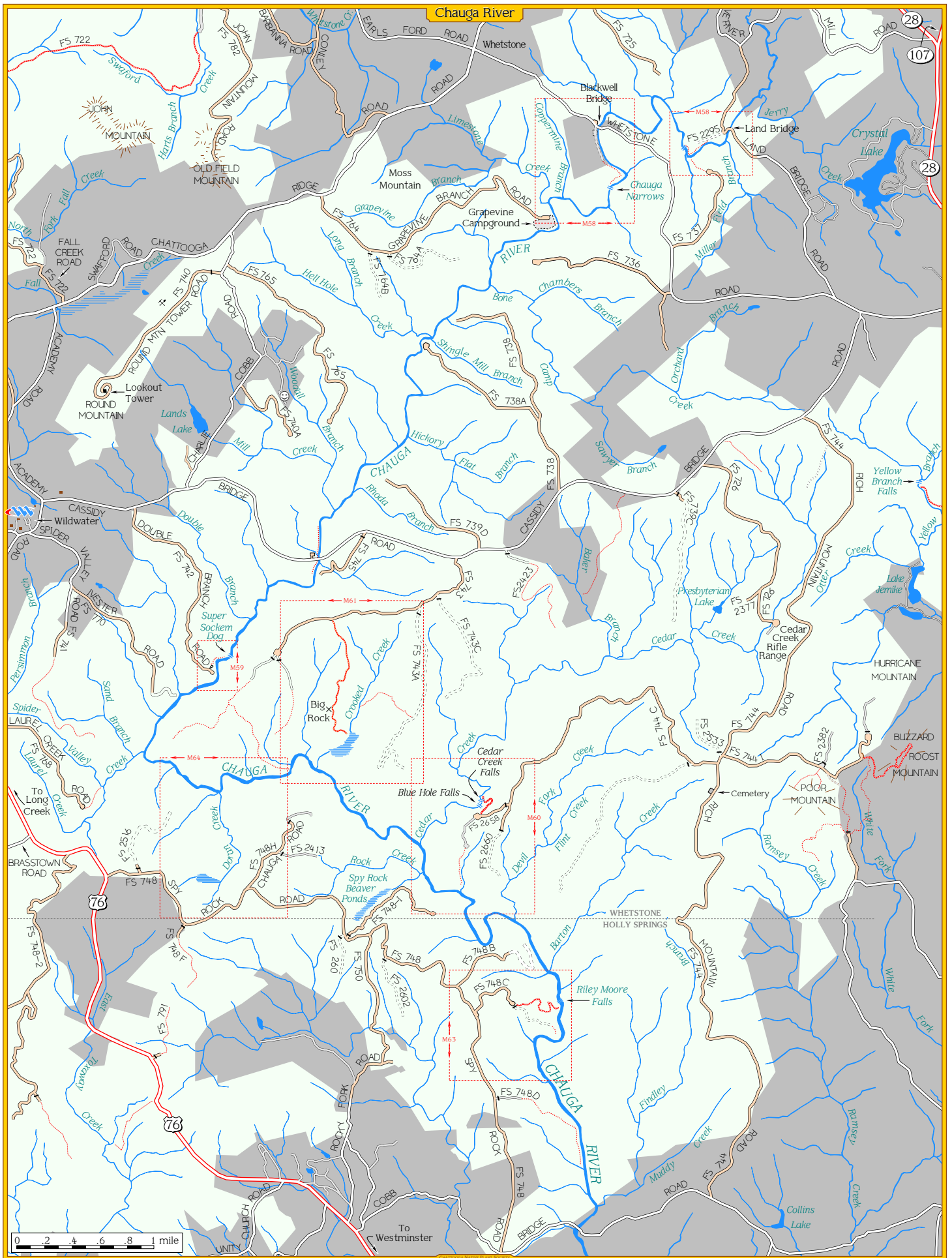
Tallulah Gorge has long been a tourist attraction. In recent years, as Tallulah Gorge State Park, a museum, bridges, walkways, picnic facilities and observation decks have been constructed. The gorge is a must see for anyone passing through the area. You need a permit to hike into the bottom of the gorge. Check at the museum for regulations. There are now stairs that make the descent into the gorge quite easy. You'll find great photo-ops and an amazing diversity of plant species. The park is off Highway 441/23 just north of Tallulah Falls, look for signs. See comments above on the lower part of the gorge that is flooded by Tugaloo Lake. *Lindernia monticola*, Rock False Pimpernel was recorded in the gorge in 1932 but not seen since. A few other plants recorded in the gorge.

*Asplenium trichomanes*, Maidenhair Spleenwort  
*Calopogon tuberosus tuberosus*, Grass Pink  
*Carex albursina*, White Bear Sedge  
*Hieracium paniculatum*, Panicked Hawk Weed  
*Osmunda regalis spectabilis*, Royal Fern

*Oxypolis rigidior*, Cowbane  
*Parnassia asarifolia*, Grass of Parnassus  
*Platanthera clavellata*, Small Woodland Orchid  
*Platanthera integrilabia*, Monkey-face Orchid  
*Pogonia ophioglossoides*, Rose Pogonia

*Polygala paucifolia*, Fringed Polygala  
*Rosa palustris*, Swamp Rose  
*Toxicodendron vernix*, Poison Sumac  
*Trillium persistens*, Persistent Trillium  
*Utricularia subulata*, Slender Bladderwort





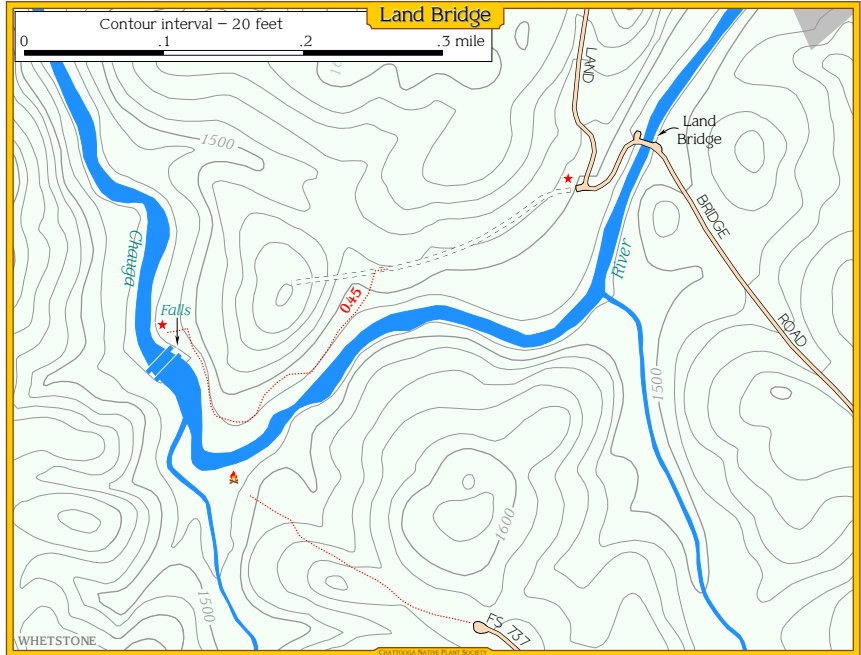
## Chauga River maps page 8, 57

The Chauga River from Land Bridge Road downstream to Cobb Bridge Road, about 14.8 river miles, is all within the National Forest. When hiking in this watershed you are almost always confronted with steep sided ridges and coves. The coves have thickets of Rhododendron and Mountain Laurel while the ridge tops are often open mixed forest or pine. As within the Chattooga watershed, the ridge tops often have a trail of some sorts along their spine. Old abandoned logging roads can be found throughout. This does not mean they are easily hiked. Trout are released into the Chauga on certain days or dates and it's not unusual to find fishermen at any of the more accessible points along the river.



Falls downstream of Land Bridge

Kayakers run the Chauga especially at high water levels and have names for many of the rapids and other features. The **Brevard Zone** has played a big role in the Chauga watershed. This is an ancient fault or subduction zone that parallels the Chauga River from the Blue Ridge escarpment southward then follows the Brasstown valley and lower Panther Creek to the piedmont through the southern part of our area. Geologists have shown that the Chauga River at one time flowed into the Tugaloo River along the course now known as Brasstown Creek. In some areas the fault has exposed the underlying sedimentary rock. This calcium rich rock and the resulting alkaline soil supports a flora unique to our area. Many botanical studies have been conducted in the Chauga River gorge. Some of the study areas have such outstanding collections of plants that their exact location has been kept secret out of fear that visitors would damage these spots.

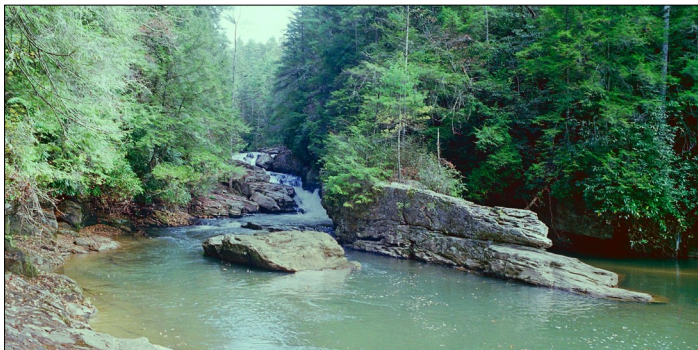
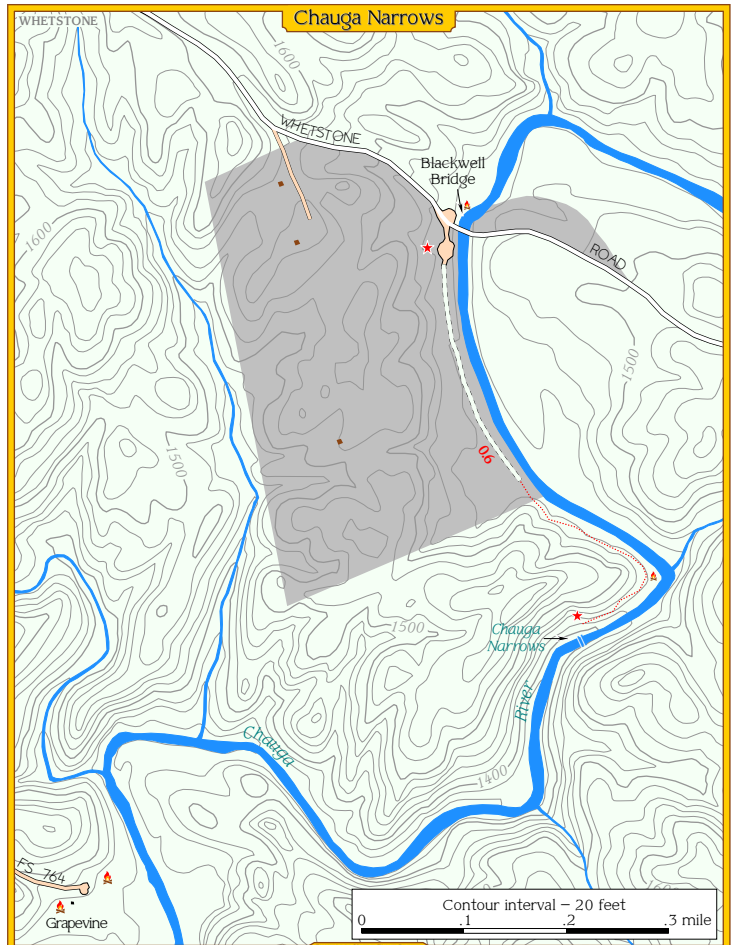


### Land Bridge Falls maps page 8 C3, 57, and right →

(N34 49.983 W83 09.487). The Chauga River enters the National Forest just above Land Bridge. This little bridge across the Chauga River is a very popular fishing spot. From Highway 28 turn onto Whetstone Road. Drive 0.9 miles and turn right onto Land Bridge Road, easy to miss. The pavement ends at about 1.3 miles; another 0.2 miles to Land Bridge. Cross the bridge and find a trailhead about 100 yards on the left. This well used fishermen's trail goes along an old logging road then left to the river. It's only one half mile or less to a scenic waterfall area.

### Chauga Narrows maps page 8 C3, 33, 57 and right →

(N34 49.611 W83 10.400). There are several spots on the Chauga River known as "The Narrows". This Chauga Narrows is about 0.6 miles downstream of the Blackwell Bridge (N34 49.988 W83 10.494) on Whetstone Road. Here the river drops over a small ledge, then goes left down a narrow crack or chute to a pool. The total drop is about 25 feet, the crack about 60 feet long. There's a small picturesque rock island in the pool at the bottom. More smaller falls are downstream. From the Highway 76 bridge go east 2.1 miles and turn left onto Chattooga Ridge Road (SC 196). Go about 6.3 miles to the Whetstone intersection, a four way stop, and turn right onto Whetstone Road. Go 1.1 miles to the Chauga River bridge and a pull out on the right just before you cross the bridge. This is a rough pull-out, go slow. Park here and walk the trail downstream to the narrows, about 0.6 miles.



Chauga Narrows

**Grapevine** maps page 36, 46, 57

(N34 49.415 W83 10.854). Off Chattooga Ridge Road. A popular Chauga River camping area at the end of Grapevine Branch Road FS 764. Forest Service facilities include waste cans, toilet, camping and parking areas. Although the Chauga is a fairly small stream here it is a popular fishing spot. A riverside trail goes downstream for some distance from the camping area. Another ill defined trail goes upstream and with some diligence and difficulty you can hike the 0.8 miles up to the narrows. From the Highway 76 bridge go east 2.1 miles and turn left onto Chattooga Ridge Road. Drive 5.2 miles and turn right onto Grapevine Branch Road. The road sign is often missing from this intersection. Just before you reach the intersection you will pass 2 mobile homes on the right, then a large open field.

**Round Mountain Tower Road** map page 57

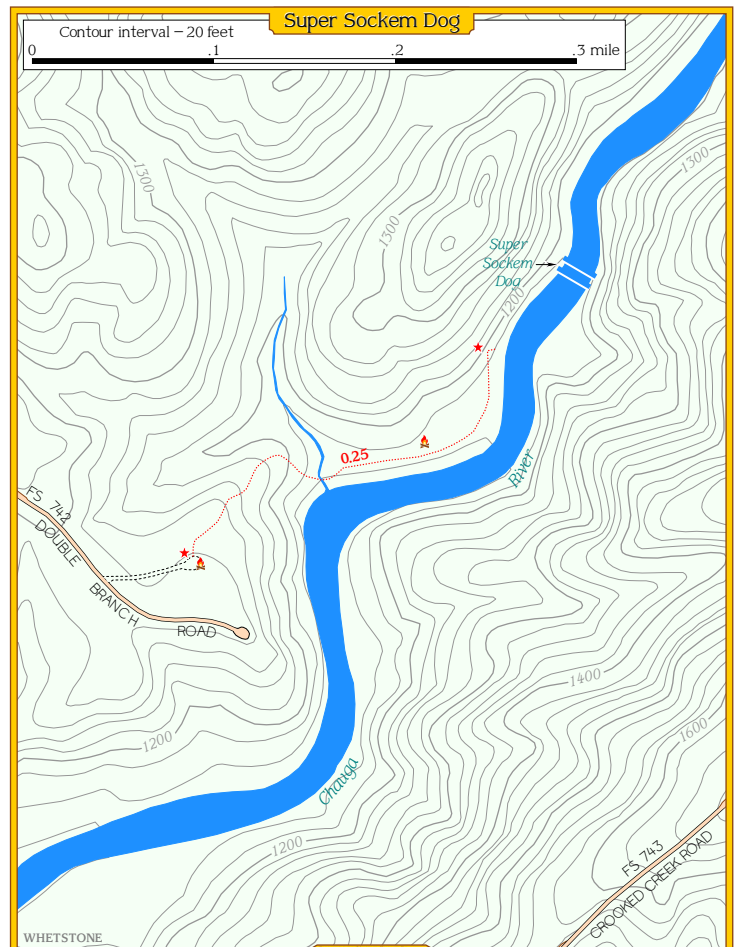
The Long Creek fire tower (N34 48.306 W83 14.265) is atop this small mountain, 2,140 feet. At one time it offered a great view of the surrounding area. The tower is no longer in use except for telephone antennas and the view is now largely blocked by surrounding trees. It isn't clear if visitors are permitted up the tower but at this time there are no signs or barriers of any kind. Joggers and bicyclists still enjoy trekking the 1.5 miles to the top of the mountain. The road goes along a ridge formed by Long Mountain and Round Mountain. This ridge is a watershed divide with the Chauga drainage going east and the Chattooga drainage going west. The entire road is good for wildflowers and is, oddly enough, one of the best places to find damselflies, dragonflies and butterflies in the spring and summer. From the Highway 76 bridge go east 2.1 miles and turn left onto Chattooga Ridge Road. Drive 3.5 miles and turn right onto Charlie Cobb Road then 0.3 miles to a dirt road on the right, Round Mountain Tower Road, FS 740. Park at the gate but do not block the road. Telephone company maintenance personnel occasionally drive the road to the tower.



Round Mountain Lookout Tower

**Super Sockem Dog** map page 57 and right →

(N34 46.706 W83 13.257). Boaters are responsible for the name of this waterfall. It's about a 10 foot drop during high water. This is a scenic spot and good for damselflies and dragonflies. A large rock just downstream provides a good spot for photos of the falls. It is however mostly covered in Poison Ivy. From the Highway 76 bridge travel east 2.8 miles and turn left onto Raines Road. Drive 1.8 miles to Academy Road. A large white building, Wildwater Ltd. Rafting, is on the left; turn left. After only 0.3 miles turn right (east) onto Cassidy Bridge Road. Drive 0.7 miles and turn right onto a dirt road, Double Branch Road. This is FS 742 and has the appearance of a private drive. Go to the end of the road, about 1.6 miles. You may have noticed a pull-out on the left about 100 yards or less from the end of the road, back up and pull in here or park on the main road and walk the short distance up to the trailhead; campsite with trailhead on the left. Hike down the ridge trail to the river then upstream to Super Sockem Dog, total hiking distance of only 0.3 miles. A bend in the river where the trail comes down to the river is known as Eel Hole. In the past, eels were commonly caught here. Dams have now blocked migrations of the eel so they are no longer found in the Chauga River.



Super Sockem Dog

## Rich Mountain Road FS 744 maps page 57, 62

This road follows the eastern rim of the Chauga River drainage, great for wildflowers. It is a dirt road, about 7.6 miles long, from Cassidy Bridge Road (N34 48.128 W83 08.913) to Cobb Bridge Road (N34 43.223 W83 09.543). Numerous rich coves of the Chauga drainage originate along the western side of this road. From Cassidy Bridge go 4.3 miles east and turn right onto Rich Mountain Road. The road entrance is quite wide; no street sign but there is a Carsonite sign on the right.

## Buzzard Roost Mountain, Poor Mountain\* map page 57

These two mountains are just outside our area but are a very worthwhile visit for wildflower enthusiasts. The area is associated with the *Brevard Zone* and has degraded marble outcroppings that give it a very interesting flora. From Cassidy Bridge Road turn onto Rich Mountain Road and drive about 3.2 miles and turn left onto FS 744I. You'll see a large sign on the right at about 1 mile, *right*>. The trailhead (N34 46.004 W83 08.507) to **Buzzard Roost Mountain** is another 100 yards or so to a pull-out on the right. A short distance down this trail you will find signs and a map of the area. The trail is very easy, less than 1.5 miles total, well maintained and has round embossed aluminum markers. The hike to **Poor Mountain** is a short bushwhack. Park at FS 2382 (N34 45.961 W83 08.821) and hike southwest only 0.2 miles to a marble cliff area, picture right. This bushwhack is shown as a fine dotted line on map 57. Turning more southeastward and following an old logging road will take you to the summit of Poor Mountain.

A few more plants not mentioned on the sign.

*Aletris farinosa*, Colic Root  
*Collinsonia verticillata*, Whorled Horse Balm  
*Manfreda virginica*, Virginia Agave  
*Eryngium yuccifolium*, Rattlesnake Master  
*Echinacea laevigata*, Smooth Cone Flower  
*Tetragonotheca helianthoides*, Squarehead

## Blue Hole Falls maps page 57, 62 and right >

(N34 45.696 W83 11.391). This waterfall on Cedar Creek drops about 40 feet into a pool. The drop isn't vertical but more of a drop, slide, chute. This area is within the *Brevard Zone* and is a haven for a number of rare plants. Steep rock faces border both sides of the pool. River left is a vertical cliff about 60 feet high. From Cassidy Bridge go 4.3 miles east and turn right onto Rich Mountain Road FS 744. Drive 3.2 miles and turn right onto FS 744C. At 2.6 miles park or turn right onto FS 2658. This road has a gate that may be closed. The gate is usually open and the road is usually suitable for regular cars. It's 0.3 miles to a clearing; FS 2659 on the right. This old road is lacking a sign and is now blocked with large rocks and a mound of dirt followed by a small water filled pit. While walking this road you will hear the falls to your left. Because of the very high cliffs, accessing the falls on this side of the stream is impossible. A short walk will take you to Cedar Creek. Before you come to the creek you will notice at least two trails on the left going down to the creek. They lead to a flat area just upstream of the falls and downstream of a minor falls known as **Cedar Creek Falls**. You will need to cross Cedar Creek here and go downstream to view Blue Hole Falls. Crossing the creek here, below Cedar Creek Falls, will take you to a downstream trail that is precipitously close to the steep stream bank. At low water you can get down to the large pool without getting wet. From the parking area at the blocked trailhead the Forest Service road continues on as a four wheel drive road for 0.3 miles. From here a trail, 0.3 miles, leads down to the Chauga River. Hike from the main road, FS 744C to the falls is 0.6 miles, to the river about 1 mile. A vine with neat flowers, *Matelea carolinensis*, Carolina Angle Pod, is quite common in this area.

# BUZZARD ROOST HERITAGE PRESERVE

THIS PROPERTY IS OWNED AND MANAGED BY THE SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE AND MARINE RESOURCES DEPARTMENT. THE PRESERVE PROTECTS A WIDE DIVERSITY OF RARE PLANT SPECIES ASSOCIATED WITH MARBLE ROCK OUTCROPPINGS AND CIRCUMNEUTRAL SOILS. SOME OF THE RARE PLANTS FOUND HERE ARE PURPLE CLIFFBRAKE, BLACK-STEMMED SPLEENWORT, AND WOOLY LIPFERN.

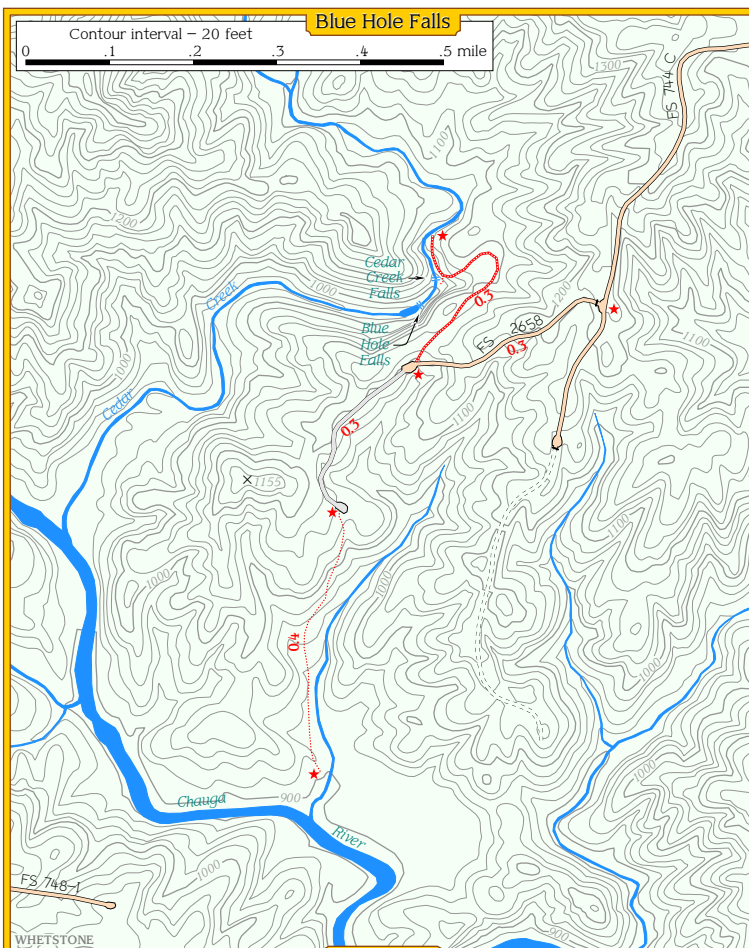
THIS AREA WILL BE MAINTAINED PRIMARILY TO INSURE SURVIVAL OF THE RARE PLANTS, MARBLE OUTCROPPINGS, AND NATURAL COMMUNITIES FOUND ON THE PRESERVE. THIS AREA WAS ACQUIRED WITH ASSISTANCE FROM THE S.C. NATURE CONSERVANCY AND THROUGH PARTIAL PROPERTY DONATION BY DR. BILLY AND KIMBERLEY CAMPBELL. MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES ON THE PRESERVE ARE CARRIED OUT BY THE S.C.W.M.R.D. AND A VOLUNTEER STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE IN COORDINATION WITH THE U.S. FOREST SERVICE.

VISITATION IS WELCOME, SPECIAL REGULATIONS APPLY TO THIS PROPERTY.

NONGAME AND HERITAGE TRUST  
S.C. WILDLIFE & MARINE RES. DEPT.  
P.O. BOX 167  
COLUMBIA, SC 29202



Marble cliffs at Poor Mountain.



**Crooked Creek\*** maps page 58 and below

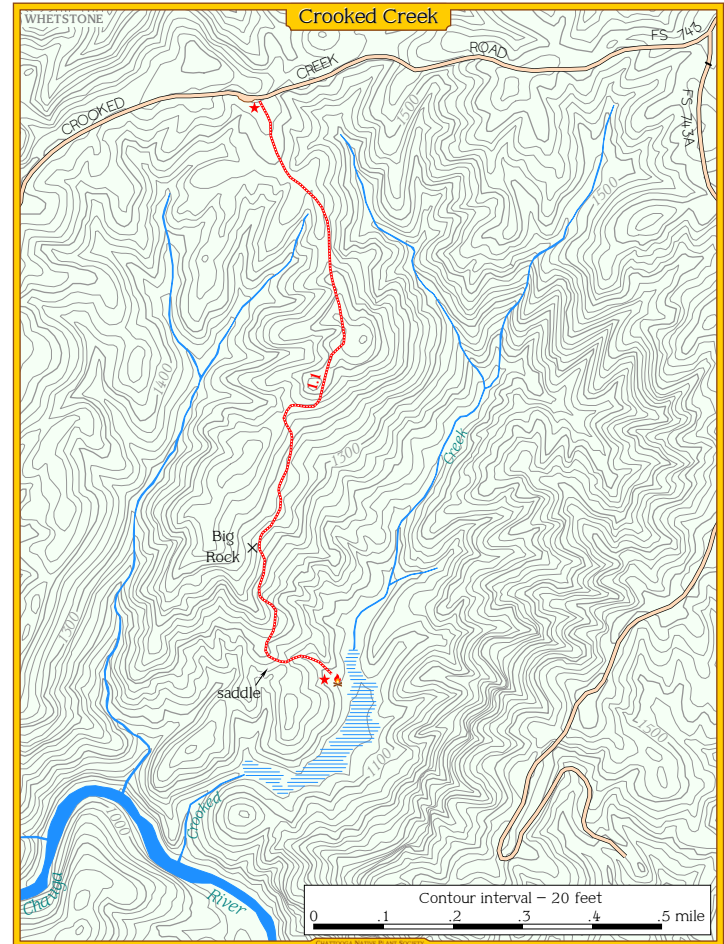
(N34 45.924 W83 12.630). This creek is in a very rich cove. It's one of our best wildflower locations. Crooked Creek enters the Chauga River about 3.9 river miles downstream of Cassidy Bridge. The upper drainage is quite large with several small drainages that join to form the main stream. There is a series of beaver ponds at the bottom of the cove just before the confluence with the river. From the Highway 76 bridge travel east 2.8 miles and turn left onto Raines Road. Drive 1.8 miles to Academy Road. A large white building, Wildwater Rafting, is on the left; turn left. After only 0.3 miles at a 3-way stop intersection turn right onto Cassidy Bridge Road. Cassidy Bridge is 2.4 miles. Drive 1.2 miles beyond the bridge and turn right onto Crooked Creek Road FS 743 (N34 47.255 W83 11.573). A well defined trail now goes to the beaver ponds on the lower part of Crooked Creek and is the easiest way to get to the Crooked Creek beaver ponds. The trailhead is a little tricky to find. From the highway go down FS 743 for about 1.5 miles. In a right turn you will see a small pull-out on the left. This pull-out is nothing more than a slightly widened place on the left side of the right turn. Park here and walk just a few yards back down the road to find a well developed trail. This trail is shown as FS 743B (N34 46.852 W83 12.510) on the Whetstone Forest Service quadrangle but has no sign at the trailhead. It might be easier to find the trailhead by driving to the end of the road then coming back 0.4 miles. The beginning of the trail has the remains of an old tank trap and is in pine with lots of small scraggly trees. The trail, still well defined, goes along a ridge top then the left side of the ridge into nice open hardwoods. You will pass a really big rock on the right side of the trail. At 0.2 miles beyond the rock the trail seems to disappear at a small saddle. Go left down a ravine with windfalls and brambles to the beaver ponds. The amount of water in these ponds is very variable according to what the beavers are doing at the time. It's also a good place for dragonflies.



*Spigelia marilandica*, Indian Pink



Some plants recorded at Crooked Creek.



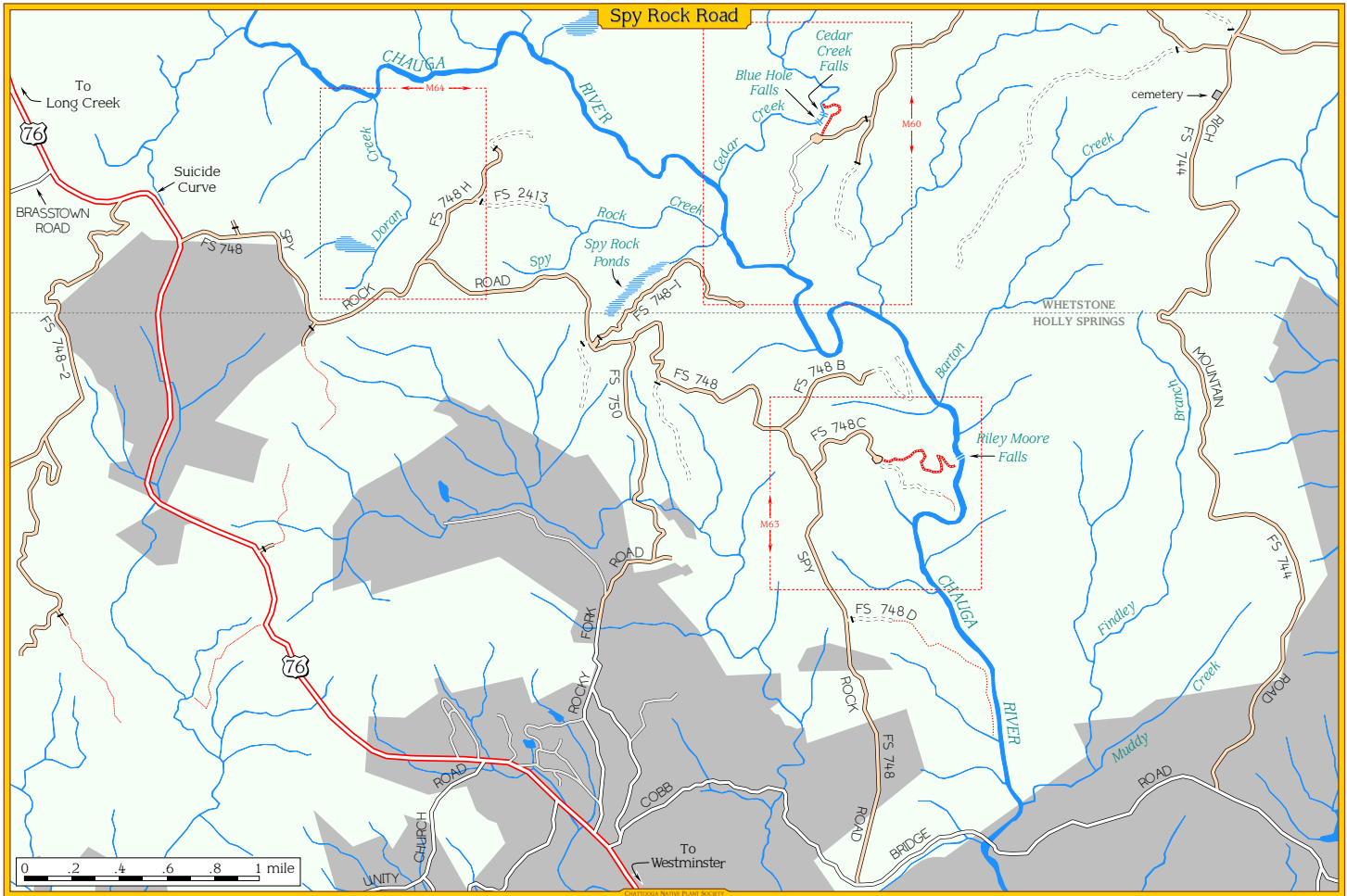
- Adiantum pedatum pedatum*, Maidenhair Fern
- Aesculus flava*, Sweet Buckeye
- Ampicarpa bracteata*, Hog Peanut
- Anemone thalictroides*, Rue Anemone
- Aplectrum hyemale*, Putty Root Orchid
- Aralia spinosa*, Devil's Walkingstick
- Arisaema triphyllum*, Jack in the Pulpit
- Bignonia capreolata*, Cross Vine
- Botrychium virginianum*, Rattlesnake Fern
- Calycanthus floridus*, Sweet Shrub
- Cardamine concatenata*, Cut-leaf Toothwort
- Caulophyllum thalictroides*, Blue Cohosh
- Cercis canadensis*, Redbud
- Chamaelirium luteum*, Devil's Bit
- Chimaphila maculata*, Spotted Wintergreen
- Chrysogonum virginianum australe*, Green and gold
- Cimicifuga racemosa*, Black Cohosh
- Collinsonia verticellata*, Whorled Horse Balm
- Conopholis americana*, Squaw Root
- Coreopsis major rigida*, Stiff-leaved Coreopsis
- Cornus florida*, Flowering Dogwood
- Cynoglossum virginianum*, Wild Comphry
- Cypripedium calceolus*, Yellow Lady's Slippers
- Deparia acrostichoides*, Silvery Glade Fern
- Erigeron pulchellus*, Robin Plantain
- Erythronium umbilicatum umbilicatum*, Trout Lily

- Euonymus americanus*, Hearts-a-bustin'
- Galax aphylla*, Galax
- Galearis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis
- Geranium maculatum*, Wild Geranium
- Goodyera pubescens*, Rattlesnake Plantain
- Hepatica acutiloba*, Liverwort
- Hexastylus arifolia*, Heart Leaf
- Hieracium venosum*, Rattlesnake Weed
- Huperzia lucidula*, Shining Club Moss
- Hydrangea arborescens*, Wild Hydrangea
- Hypoxis hirsuta*, Star Grass
- Iris cristata*, Crested Dwarf Iris
- Iris verna smaliana*, Dwarf Iris
- Juncus effusus*, Soft Rush
- Kalmia latifolia*, Mountain Laurel
- Liriodendron tulipifera*, Tulip Tree
- Magnolia fraseri*, Fraser Magnolia
- Maianthemum racemosum*, False Solomon's Seal
- Medeola virginiana*, Indian Cucumber Root
- Melanthium parviflorum*, Appalachian Bunch Flower
- Mitchella repens*, Partridge Berry
- Monarda punctata*, Spotted Horsemint
- Obolaria virginica*, Pennywort
- Panax quinquefolium*, Ginseng
- Parthenocissus quinquefolia*, Virginia Creeper
- Pedicularis canadensis canadensis*, Lousewort

- Phegopteris hexagonoptera*, Broad Beech Fern
- Phlox amoena*, Downy Phlox
- Podophyllum peltatum*, May Apple
- Prosartes lanuginosa*, Yellow Mandarin
- Rhododendron maximum*, Rosebay
- Rhododendron periclymenoides*, Pinxter Flower
- Rhus radicans*, Poison Ivy
- Salvia lyrata*, Lyre-leaved Sage
- Sanguinaria canadensis*, Bloodroot
- Sanicula canadensis*, Snake Root
- Sparganium americanum*, Bur Reed
- Spigelia marilandica*, Indian Pink
- Styrax grandifolia*, Bigleaf Snowbell
- Tiarella cordifolia*, Foam Flower
- Trillium catesbaei*, Catesby's Trillium
- Trillium cuneatum*, Toadshade
- Trillium discolor*, Faded Trillium
- Trillium vaseyi*, Vasey's Trillium
- Typha latifolia*, Common Cattail
- Uvularia perfoliata*, Perfoliate Bellwort
- Viola hastata*, Halberd-leaf Violet
- Viola macloskeyi pallens*, Northern White Violet
- Viola tripartita tripartita*, Three-part-leaved Violet
- Viola walteri*, Prostrate Blue Violet

## Spy Rock Road maps page 58 and below

Spy Rock Road FS 748 is a dirt road, about 6 miles long, from Highway 76 to Cobb Bridge Road. It parallels the Chauga River and provides access to a large wilderness area. Many of the coves and ridges here are very steep making off trail hikes quite difficult. Numerous camping areas along this stretch of river are favorite spots for local families, fishermen and hunters. Many botanists, geologists and other researchers have long studied the natural wonders of this section. From the Highway 76 bridge go east about 6.6 miles and turn left onto Spy Rock Road FS 748 (N34 45.238 W83 14.232). After passing Brasstown Road, Spy Rock Road is on the left at the top of a hill after you pass through a tight curve known as Suicide Curve.



## Spy Rock Ponds\* maps page 58 and above †

This is a series of well constructed beaver ponds along a tiny tributary of Spy Rock Creek. The entire area is easily accessed from FS 748-I. There is ample parking at a wide intersection, Carsonite sign and metal barrier. The road is very wide and planted with grass and clover. To get to the beginning of the pond complex hike down the road and go down the ridge on your left as soon as you see the ponds in the cove below. To get to the lower ponds hike on the road until it drops down to pond level and go left through the woods. Brambles can be aggravating here but the distance to the ponds is only a few yards. There are places where you can cross the stream unless recent rains have been heavy. The entire length of the ponds are most easily hiked along the opposite shore (river left). This is a great area for the naturalist. The Spotted Salamander, *Ambystoma maculatum*, breeds here in numbers in the winter. The Wood Frog, *Rana sylvatica*, hasn't been recorded here. Unexpectedly a recent Wood Frog study failed to find them here. They often breed in pools used by the Spotted Salamander and Wood Frogs do use pools near the main road, Spy Rock Road. There are Wood Duck boxes and other species of ducks have been seen here. The Mud Turtle, *Kinosternon subrubrum subrubrum*, has been recorded here. The Northern Cricket Frog, *Acris crepitans*, is very common along the shorelines. There's been no attempt (by me) to record the plants but the area would probably be of interest to botanists. An unexpected damselfly, the Great Spreadwing, *Archilestes grandis*, was very common here in November 2010. The Shadow Darner, *Aeshna umbrosa*, and the Autumn Meadowhawk, *Sympetrum vicinum* were photographed here that same month. From Highway 76 turn onto Spy Rock Road and drive 2.4 miles to FS 748-I.



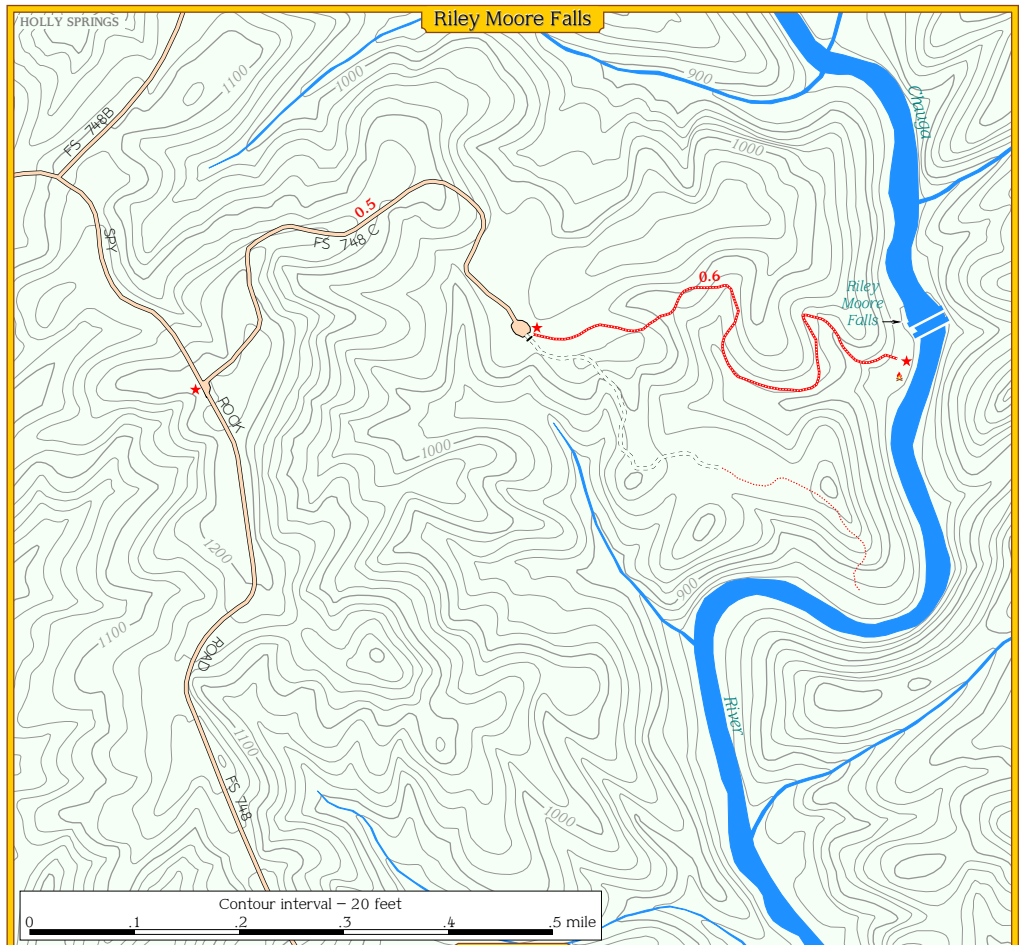
Spy Rock Ponds



Riley Moore Falls

**Riley Moore Falls** *maps page 57, 62, →*

(N34 44.469 W83 10.756). Riley Moore Falls on the Chauga River, is about 12 feet high and 100 feet wide, the site of an old mill. Kayakers run the falls at high water levels. From Highway 76 turn onto Spy Rock Road. Drive about 4 miles and turn left onto FS 748C (N34 44.416 W83 11.419). A Carsonite sign marks this intersection. The road is about 0.5 miles long and can be difficult to drive in a low clearance car. There is space for parking if you decide not to drive the road. At the end of the road you'll find a small barren clay parking area. The road does continue on as a 4-wheel drive road. As you start down this road look left for the trailhead. The Forest Service has a sign at the trailhead — says 0.6 miles to the falls. This is a first class trail similar to a nature trail you might find in a big city park. Hikers often swim in the pool and climb on the rocks at the base of the falls. There are many campsites along the river and fishermen trails parallel much of the river in this area. Great for the wildflower enthusiast. From the waterfall go downstream a few yards and you'll find campsites and a large healthy stand of a native *Yucca*, *Yucca filamentosa*.



**Doran Creek\*** maps page 58, 62, 64+

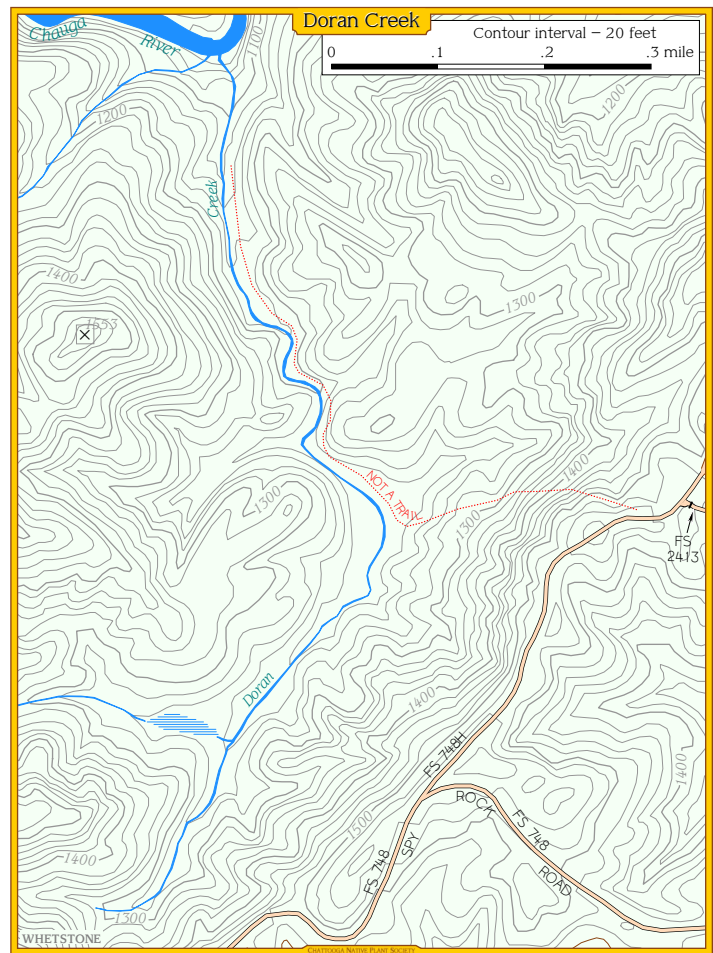
(N34 45.773 W83 13.374). This small tributary of the Chauga River is one of our best areas for wildflowers. Easy to reach by hiking north off Spy Rock Road FS 748 or Chauga Road FS 748H. From Highway 76 turn onto Spy Rock Road FS 748. Drive 1.4 miles and turn left onto FS 748H. The Doran Creek drainage is off to the left for the length of this road. Drive about 0.6 miles and find a pull-out to the right at the blocked FS 2413. Park here. Walk back toward Spy Rock Road looking off to the right to find openings in the Rhododendron thicket. The slopes are rather steep but, except for a band of Rhododendron, the woods are fairly open, easy walking. At the bottom of the slope the creek flows through a fairly flat place very rich in wildflowers. The red dotted line on the map to the right is an estimation of the route taken on trips to this area. This is an easy bushwhack, steep only on the initial descent. The lower section near the confluence with the Chauga River is steep, has thick vegetation forcing you up onto the slope. Grottos and exposed rocks are more numerous closer to the river. On one trip to the area a large Tulip Tree, diameter 57 inches DBH, was recorded on the slope that borders FS 748H. This is a great wildflower hike in spring around the last week of April through the second week of May. The Yellow Lady Slippers here have quite large flowers. Walking Fern can be found on a few of the rocks that are exposed on the slopes. Some of the plants found here.

- Adiantum pedatum*, Maiden-hair Fern
- Aesculus flava*, Yellow Buckeye
- Anemone thalictroides*, Rue Anemone
- Arisaema triphyllum*, Jack-in-the-pulpit
- Asplenium rhizophyllum*, Walking Fern
- Asplenium trichomanes*, Maidenhair Spleenwort
- Astilbe biternata*, False Goat's Beard
- Botrychium virginiana*, Rattlesnake Fern
- Calycanthus floridus*, Sweet Shrub
- Carex plantaginea*, Plantain Sedge
- Carex radfordii*, Radford's Sedge
- Chamaelirium luteum*, Devil's Bit
- Collinsonia verticillata*, Whorled Horse Balm
- Cornus florida* Flowering Dogwood
- Cynoglossum virginianum*, Wild Comfrey
- Cypripedium parviflorum*, Yellow Lady's Slipper
- Deparia acrostichoides*, Silvery Glade Fern
- Epifagus virginiana*, Beech Drops
- Erigeron pulchellus*, Poor Robin's Plantain
- Eryngium yuccifolium*, Rattlesnake Master
- Erythronium umbilicatum*, Trout lily
- Geranium maculatum*, Wild Geranium
- Hepatica acutiloba*, Sharp-lobed Hepatica
- Hexastylis heterophylla*, Heart Leaf
- Huperzia lucidula*, Shining Club Moss
- Laportea canadensis*, Wood Nettle
- Leucothoe fontanesiana*, Mountain Dog Hobble
- Ligusticum canadensis*, Lovage
- Liriodendron tulipifera*, Tulip Tree
- Magnolia acuminata*, Cucumber Tree



- Maianthemum racemosum*, False Solomon's Seal
- Medeola virginiana*, Indian Cucumber Root
- Mitchella repens*, Partridge Berry
- Obolaria virginica*, Pennywort
- Orchis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis
- Orbanche uniflora*, One-flowered Cancer Root
- Panax quinquefolium*, Ginseng
- Phegopteris hexagonoptera*, Broad Beech Fern
- Phlox amoena*, Downy Phlox
- Phlox divaricata*, Blue Phlox
- Podophyllum peltatum*, May Apple
- Polygonatum biflorum*, Solomon's Seal
- Polypodium virginiana*, Rock Cap Fern
- Prosartes lanuginosa*, Yellow Mandarin
- Salvia lyrata*, Lyre-leaved Sage
- Sanguinaria canadensis*, Blood Root
- Sanicula canadensis*, Black Snake Root
- Sisyrinchium sp.*, Blue-eyed Grass
- Tiarella cordifolia*, Foam Flower

- Trichomanes boschianum*, Bristle Fern
- Trichomanes intricatum*, Grotto Felt
- Trichomanes petersii*, Dwarf Filmy Fern
- Trillium catesbaei*, Catesby's Trillium
- Trillium cuneatum*, Toadshade
- Trillium discolor*, Faded Trillium
- Trillium vaseyi*, Vasey's Trillium
- Uvularia perfoliata*, Perfoliate Bellwort
- Veratrum viride*, White Hellebore
- Vicia caroliniana*, Wood Vetch
- Viola blanda*, Sweet White Violet
- Viola hastata*, Halberd-leaved Violet
- Viola labradorica*, Dog Violet
- Viola palmata*, Early Blue Violet
- Viola pedata*, Bird-foot Violet
- Viola rotundifolia*, Round-leaved Yellow Violet
- Viola tripartita tripartita*, Three-parted Violet
- Viola walteri*, Walter's Violet
- Waldsteinia fragarioides*, Barren Strawberry



**Brasstown Creek** maps page 46, 65

This is a major stream in our area. The falls area is a very popular place for campers and fishermen. From the Highway 76 bridge travel east (through Long Creek) 5.9 miles and turn right onto Brasstown Road. This road parallels and then crosses the stream at about 4.2 miles (dirt for the last 1.5 miles). Just before crossing the creek, at a small cement bridge, turn right onto FS 751. Go 0.5 miles to the end of the road and park. A trail goes beneath the power lines to a creek side camping and picnic area, 100 yards or so. This is a large flat area with numerous campsites. **Little Brasstown Creek** joins the main stream on the opposite bank. If you cross the main stream and follow the small tributary a few yards upstream you'll find Little Brasstown Creek Falls (N34 43.024 W83 18.148). Brasstown Creek Falls (N34 43.112 W83 18.243) is immediately downstream of the campsite area. Narrow winding and sometimes precipitous trails lead downstream to the falls area. The falls can be divided into three separate falls. The upper falls is a series of small steps that drop to a short flat section just before the middle falls; a vertical 30 foot drop. The lower falls is a narrow chute that empties into a pool along a cliff on the opposite bank. The part of Brasstown Creek referred to in the plant list includes only the creek area downstream of the Brasstown Road bridge. In the plant list Brasstown Creek refers to the area from the bridge to the falls. Lower Brasstown Creek refers to the area downstream of the falls to the Tugaloo River. To hike into lower Brasstown Creek go downstream from the falls. The hike from the falls downstream to the flat floodplain is strenuous and about 3 miles. This area is a paradise for the wildflower enthusiast and is almost devoid of human traffic. The lower portion can also be reached by bushwhacking from Damascus Church Road. Perhaps the best map for this hike is the Forest Service Tugaloo Lake quadrangle. There are a number of ridge-top trails that lead from Damascus



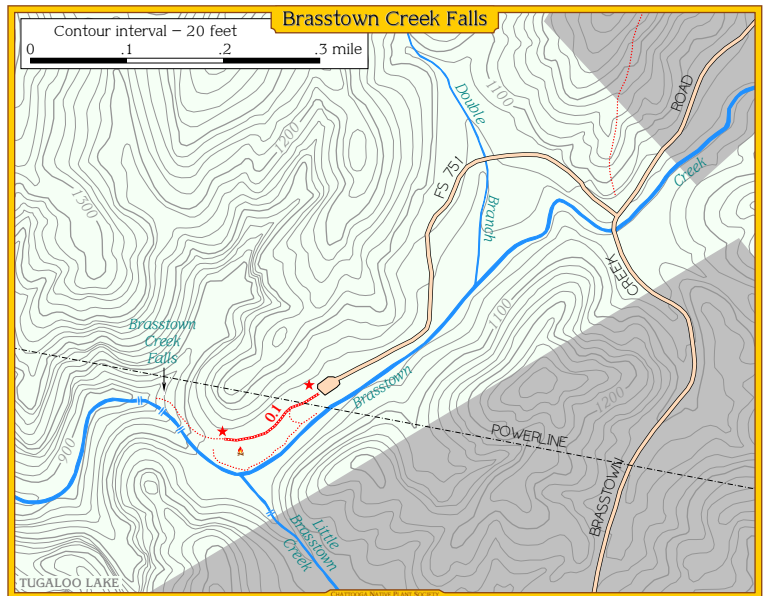


Little Brasstown Creek Falls



Middle Brasstown Creek Falls

Church Road down to Brasstown Creek, most less than 0.6 miles. On Damascus Church Road drive beyond Bull Sluice Road until the road becomes a small dirt road. Look for Forest Service Roads on the left. These will lead to the ridge-top trails. A hike upstream from the Tugaloo Bottom Lands is the easiest way to get to lower Brasstown Creek. Access from the Tugaloo Bottom Lands has now been blocked by a gate across the road so you will have to park at the gate and walk the road to Brasstown Creek, about 1.2 miles. Brasstown Creek Heritage Preserve now has 461 acres of the lower creek area. Walk-in visitors are welcome during daylight hours. From the Highway 76 bridge travel east 8.9 miles (3.7 miles beyond Brasstown Road) and turn right onto Unity Church Road. This road is near the end of a long stretch of flat, straight road, easy to miss the turn. After 5.3 miles and numerous suicide curves Unity Church Road tees into Cleveland Pike. Turn right and go about 0.6 mile to Cooper Road, an intersection well marked with several signs. It's about 4.4 miles to the Brasstown Creek Heritage Preserve gate. The area where the road goes along the Tugaloo River up to Brasstown Creek is referred to in the Vascular Plant List as the **Tugaloo Bottom Lands**. Lower Brasstown Creek is one of our richest wildflower areas. Some of the plants recorded in the area.



*Actaea pachypoda*, Doll's Eyes  
*Amsonia tabernaemontana*, Blue Dogbane  
*Arisaema dracontium*, Green Dragon  
*Asclepias variegata*, White Milk Weed  
*Asimina triloba*, Tall Pawpaw  
*Asplenium trichomanes*, Maidenhair Spleenwort  
*Athyrium asplenioides*, Southern Lady Fern  
*Cardamine flagellifera*, Blue Ridge Bitter Cress  
*Carex scabrata*, Rough Sedge  
*Carya pallida*, Pale Hickory  
*Cercis canadensis*, Redbud  
*Claytonia virginica*, Virginia Spring Beauty  
*Cleistes bifaria*, Spreading Pogonia

*Cornus alternifolia*, Alternate-leaved Dogwood  
*Cornus amomum*, Silky Dogwood  
*Diplazium pycnocarpon*, Glade Fern  
*Eupatorium cordigerum*, Round-leaved Thoroughwort  
*Heuchera americana*, American Alum Root  
*Matelea carolinensis*, Carolina Angle Pod  
*Monotropsis odorata*, Sweet Pinesap  
*Onoclea sensibilis*, Sensitive Fern  
*Osmunda regalis spectabilis*, Royal Fern  
*Ostrya virginiana*, Hop Hornbeam  
*Oxalis violacea*, Violet Wood Sorrel  
*Panax quinquefolium*, Ginseng

*Passiflora lutea*, Yellow-flowered Maypop  
*Phegopteris hexagonoptera*, Broad Beech Fern  
*Pinus pungens*, Table Mountain Pine  
*Pinus rigida*, Pitch Pine  
*Polygala paucifolia*, Gay Wings  
*Spigelia marilandica*, Indian Pink  
*Trichomanes petersii*, Dwarf Filmy Fern  
*Trillium catesbaei*, Catesby's Trillium  
*Trillium discolor*, Faded Trillium  
*Trillium rugelii*, Southern Nodding Trillium  
*Ulmus rubra*, Slippery Elm  
*Waldsteinia lobata*, Southern Barren Strawberry  
*Xerophyllum asphodeloides*, Turkey Beard

**Chau Ram County Park** *map page 8 C5*

(N34 40.892 W83 08.768). This little park gets its name from the confluence of Ramsey Creek and the Chauga River. It is outside our area but is a popular spot for waterfall enthusiasts. Ramsey Falls, right, can be viewed from the parking area. There are restrooms, picnic facilities, nature trails, and an event building that can be used for gatherings. A \$2.00 parking fee needs to be placed in an envelope at the gated entrance. The park is off Highway 76 about 3 miles west of Westminster. Look for a sign on the left near the bottom of a long straight downhill section of highway. The drive from Long Creek is about 12 miles. Look for the sign on the right about a mile after crossing the Chauga River.

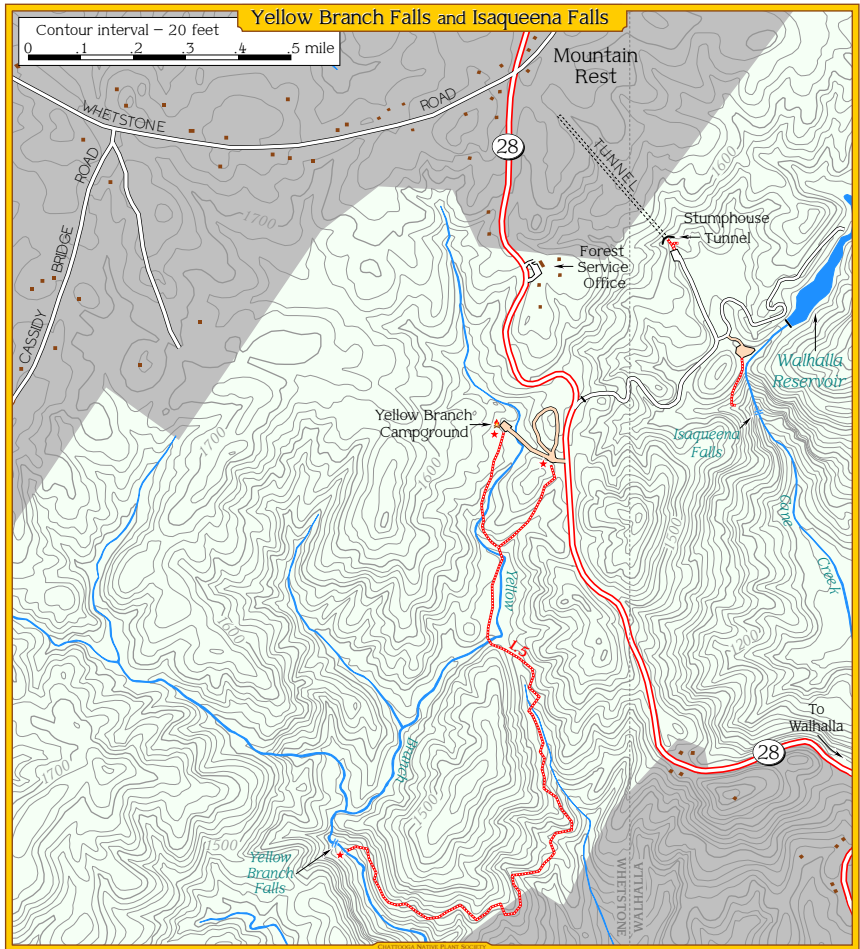


**Stumphouse Tunnel, Isaqueena Falls** maps page 8 C4 6 →  
(N34 48.375 W83 07.621).

Stumphouse Tunnel is the remains of an unfinished railroad tunnel. Started in 1852, the railroad was to connect Charleston with Knoxville then northward. It was halted by the Civil War. This is part of the same railroad bed that can be seen at Warwoman Dell. Isaqueena Falls is within easy walking distance at the little park. It is about 200 feet high and a trail leads to the bottom. The falls is named for an Indian maiden who faked a suicide by hiding behind the falls to escape pursuing Indians. Many say this is only a myth created just because there is a hiding spot behind the falls. From downtown Walhalla drive north on Highway 28 about 5.4 miles and look for a large sign at the entrance to Stumphouse Tunnel and Isaqueena Falls. *Isotria verticellata*, Large Whorled Pogonia is said to occur there.

**Yellow Branch Falls** maps page 8 C4, 58 6 →

(N34 47.686 W83 08.058). This is a very popular and scenic waterfall, about 60 feet high, broken up into numerous tiny falls. There are two trailheads. One immediately on your left and another at the campground. Both trails join after only 0.2 miles, N34 48.159 W83 07.753. There is usually room enough to park near the first trailhead. It is about 1.5 miles to the falls. The trail is easy walking, mostly level or only slightly inclined with a total elevation difference of about 260 feet. From downtown Walhalla drive about 6 miles north on Highway 28 and turn left onto Yellow Branch Road. There is a street sign. Going south from Mountain Rest, Yellow Branch Road is about 0.5 miles south of the Andrew Pickens Forest Service Office.



**Oconee Station, Station Falls** maps page 8 D3, 68

These falls are in a park well outside our area but listed here because many of our rare plant species can be found here. From downtown Walhalla go 3.7 miles north on Highway 183 and turn left onto Highway 11. Go north 2.0 miles and turn left onto Oconee Station Road. A sign, 'Historical Oconee Station', marks the intersection. The park entrance is about 2.1 miles on the right. To get to the falls do not turn into the park but keep going another 0.2 miles. There is a small pull-out on the left. A very easy walking trail goes from here to Station Cove Falls. In 2011 a Nine-banded Armadillo, *Dasypus novemcinctus*, was recorded here.

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <i>Aconitum uncinatum uncinatum</i> , Monkshood         | <i>Diplazium pycnocarpon</i> , Glade Fern                |
| <i>Allium cernuum</i> , Nodding Wild Onion              | <i>Galearis spectabilis</i> , Showy Orchis               |
| <i>Asplenium rhizophyllum</i> , Walking Fern            | <i>Hepatica acutiloba</i> , Sharp-lobed Hepatica         |
| <i>Cardamine flagellifera</i> , Blue Ridge Bitter Cress | <i>Juglans cinerea</i> , Butter Nut                      |
| <i>Carex amphibola</i> , Narrow-leaved Sedge            | <i>Orobanche uniflora</i> , One-flowered Cancer Root     |
| <i>Carex austro-caroliniana</i> , South Carolina Sedge  | <i>Podophyllum peltatum</i> , May Apple                  |
| <i>Carex gracillima</i> , Graceful Sedge                | <i>Trillium cuneatum</i> , Toadshade                     |
| <i>Carex radfordii</i> , Radford's Sedge                | <i>Trillium simile</i> , White Trillium                  |
| <i>Caulophyllum thalictroides</i> , Blue Cohosh         | <i>Viola canadensis canadensis</i> , Canada Violet       |
| <i>Collinsonia verticillata</i> , Whorled Horse Balm    | <i>Viola tripartita tripartita</i> , Three-parted Violet |

**Tamassee Falls** maps page 8 D3

(N34 53.693 W83 06.143). Also known as Lee Falls. This is not in our area but a number of plant species that are rare in our area are common here. It is one of the richest wildflower locations in the Blue Ridge area. It is also billed as the most scenic of the waterfalls in Oconee County. It is quite scenic and lush with vegetation but many would agree it isn't as photogenic as some of our other waterfalls. From downtown Walhalla go 3.7 miles north on Highway 183 and turn left onto Highway 11. Go north about 4 miles and take the left fork onto Cheochee Valley Road (N34 51.515 W83 02.059). This road changes to County Road 375 after 1.3 miles. Go another mile and turn left onto Tamassee Knob Road. After 0.5 miles turn right onto Jumping Branch Road and drive 1.5 miles to FS 715A (not FS 715) on the left. Drive about 0.6 miles to the Tamassee Creek bridge and park (N34 53.590 W83 04.882). From here go upstream along an old road for about a mile. This trail goes through wildlife openings and crosses Tamassee Creek twice. When you come to the North Fork a trail goes off to the right, go straight and cross the North Fork. Follow the South Fork on to the falls. A very easy one hour walk. Three hard to find ferns should be mentioned. *Asplenium resiliens*, Black-stem Spleenwort grows on the cliffs and rocks around the falls. *Asplenium rhizophyllum*, Walking Fern and *Cystopteris bulbifera*, Bulblet Fern can be found on rocks in and around the stream well before you get up near the falls.

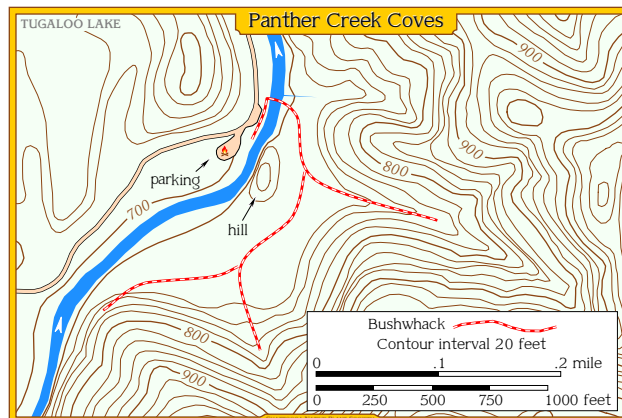


Oconee Station Falls

## Lower Panther Creek Coves\* map page 8 A5 and right →

A great hike for hard core wildflower enthusiasts; best in mid to late April. Lower Panther Creek is just south of our area but many of our rare plant species are very common here. The area mentioned here includes only the lower portion of the creek that is closely paralleled by a dirt road, Panther Creek Road. The creek flows from the west into the Tugaloo River just below Yonah Dam and about 0.5 miles upstream of the mouth of Brasstown Creek which enters the river from the other side. This lower part lies along the Brevard fault line where there are exposed rock outcrops of low grade marble. The north facing coves are exceptionally rich and each one has its own unique mix of flora.

Use the Area Map page 8. From the Highway 76 bridge travel east about 9.8 miles and turn right onto Unity Church Road. Easy to miss this turn. It's in a straight and level stretch of Highway 76, a church on the left just before you get to Unity Church Road on the right. Unity Church Road has very sharp curves and has proven to be very dangerous – drive carefully. After 6.4 miles Unity Church Road tees into Cleveland Pike, turn right. At about 2 miles you will cross the Tugaloo River into Georgia and come to Highway 184, Yonah Dam Road. Turn right and drive about 4.3 miles. Here you will find a small concrete bridge crossing Panther Creek. You'll see Yonah Dam in the distance and a picnic area on the right. Drive another 0.6 miles and turn left onto a dirt road, Panther Creek Road. Drive pass the church and at about 0.7 miles along this dirt road you will find a large pull-out with a fire ring on the left (N34 40.470 W83 21.293). At this parking/campsite area notice the knob or small hill in the flat area on the other side of the creek. Walk downstream to a shallow area and wade across. The bushwhack lines on the Panther Creek Coves map above indicate the best route to the bluff and cove areas. Be very careful when exploring the coves, the soil here is extremely fragile. This is a great early spring (April) wildflower hike although the area along the road is frequented by fishermen and campers and is heavily littered the cove area on the opposite side of the stream is mostly untouched. Some of the plants –



*Aesculus flava*, Yellow Buckeye  
*Anemone thalictroides*, Rue Anemone  
*Aquilegia canadensis*, Columbine  
*Asplenium rhizophyllum*, Walking Fern  
*Cardamine concatenata*, Cut-leaved Toothwort  
*Cardamine diphylla*, Two-leaved Toothwort  
*Cardamine flagellifera*, Blue Ridge Bitter Cress  
*Carex plantaginea*, Plantain Sedge  
*Carex radfordii*, Radford's Sedge  
*Caulophyllum thalictroides*, Blue Cohosh  
*Celtis laevigata*, Sugar Berry  
*Cercis canadensis*, Redbud

*Cladrastis kentukea*, Yellow Wood  
*Corallorrhiza wisteriana*, Spring Coral Root  
*Cystopteris protrusa*, Spreading Bladder Fern  
*Diplazium pycnocarpon*, Glade Fern  
*Dryopteris goldiana*, Goldie's Wood Fern  
*Lindera benzoin pubescens*, Spice Bush  
*Galearis spectabilis*, Showy Orchis  
*Hepatica acutiloba*, Sharp-lobed Liverwort  
*Hybanthus concolor*, Green Violet  
*Impatiens capensis*, Jewel Weed  
*Juglans cinerea*, Butter Nut  
*Mitella diphylla*, Miterwort

*Osmorhiza claytonii*, Sweet Cicely  
*Oxalis violacea*, Violet Wood Sorrel  
*Pedicularis canadensis*, Lousewort  
*Phacelia bipinnatifida*, Loose-flowered Phacelia  
*Phacelia dubia dubia*, Small-flowered Phacelia  
*Sanguinaria canadensis*, Bloodroot  
*Silene virginica*, Fire Pink  
*Trillium cuneatum*, Little Sweet Betsy  
*Trillium rugelii*, Southern Nodding Trillium  
*Valerianella radiata*, Corn Salad

## Panther Creek Falls map page 5 A5

This is another excellent wildflower hike you can take from the lower Panther Creek area. Drive to the end of Panther Creek road. Here you'll find a footbridge that crosses the stream. After crossing the stream you'll see a trail angling to the right and going upward along a ridge. Panther Creek upstream of this area is little traveled, quite beautiful and great for wildflowers. The trail roughly parallels Panther Creek for 2.6 miles up to the falls. The first half of this hike is virtually all uphill, a tiring trek but not really difficult. The trail often goes along the ridge overlooking the creek with numerous opportunities to drop down and explore undisturbed areas along the creek. There are beaches and several fire rings at the falls. There is also a trail that leads to a large flat topped rock at the top of the falls. Most visitors to the falls hike the trail down from Panther Creek Picnic Area, N34 41.945 W83 25.175, on Historic Highway 441. Drive south from Tallulah Falls and at about 3.5 miles take Historic 441 to the right. The Panther Creek Picnic Area is another mile on the right. The trail begins across the road from the park then goes beneath Highway 441. This is a very popular hike through very scenic areas. About 3.5 miles one way to the falls. Most hikers say this trail is easier although longer than the one that comes up from lower Panther Creek.



Panther Creek Falls with people sitting atop a large rock above the falls.

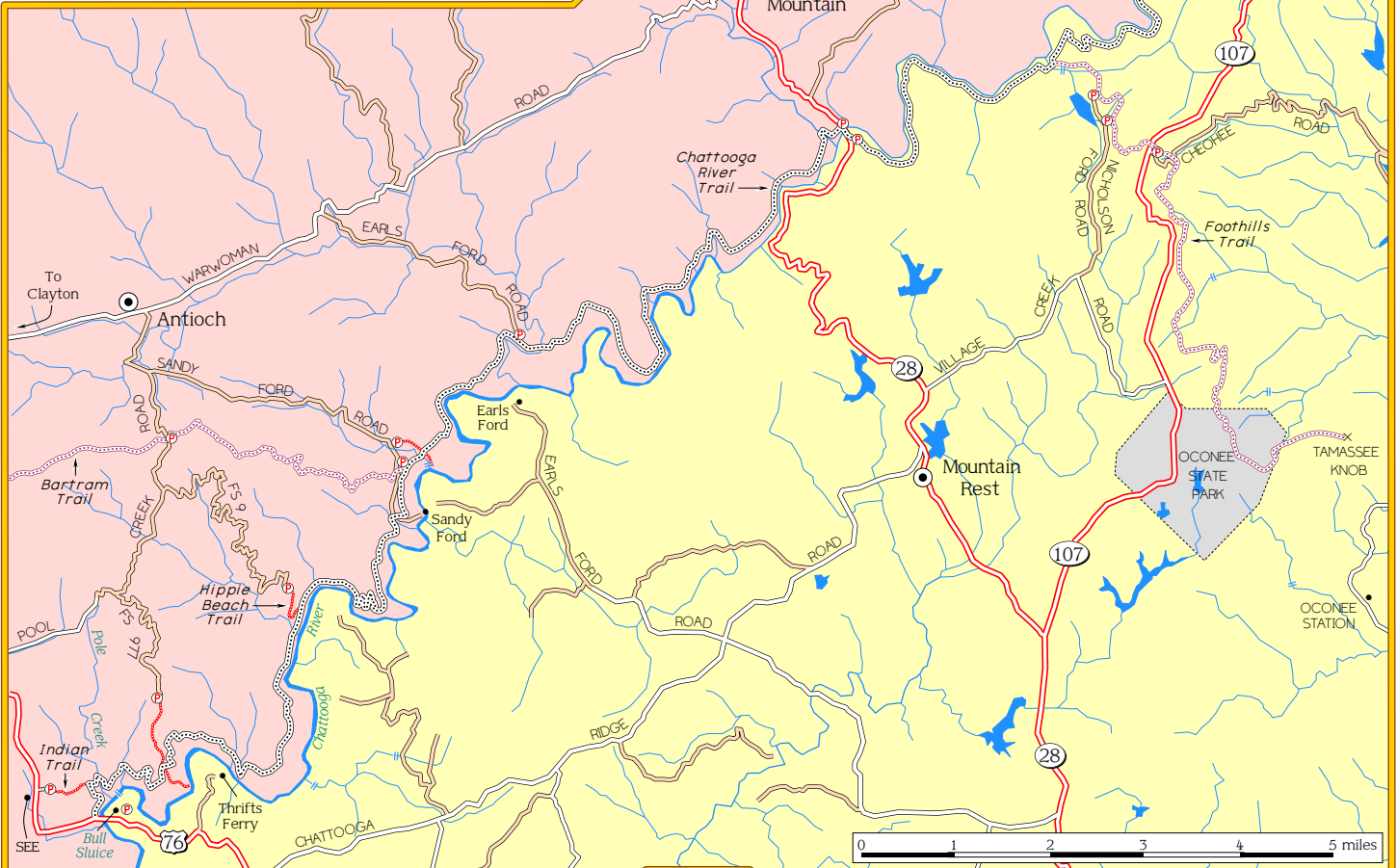
## Our Nationally Recognized Trails

We have three nationally known trails in our area; Bartram Trail, Foothills Trail and the Chattooga River Trail. The Chattooga River Trail is totally within the Chattooga River watershed although it is broken into two separate sections. It shares 14.5 miles of trail with the Bartram Trail and 8.9 miles with the Foothills Trail. The Bartram Trail has 25.5 miles in our area before it becomes contiguous with the Chattooga River Trail. These two trail maps have a tiny symbol (P) for trailhead parking.

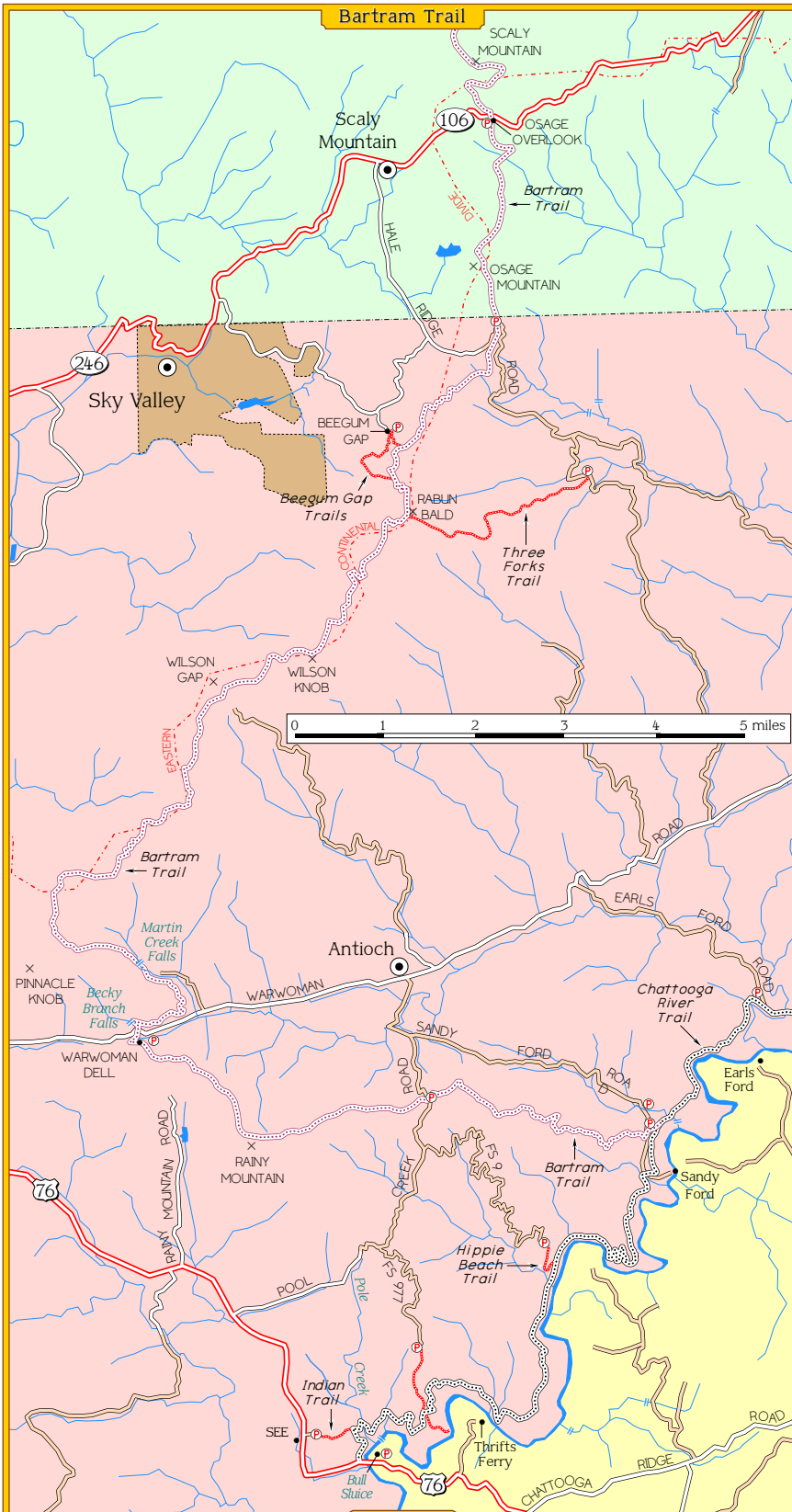
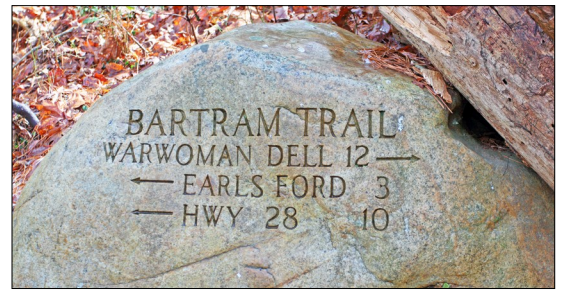
### Chattooga River Trail map →

The Chattooga River Trail is well named. It parallels the Chattooga River from The Highway 76 bridge northeast to Ellicott Rock, 36.3 miles. Another disjunct section parallels the upper part of section 00 for 5.4 miles from Bull Pen Road to Whiteside Cove Road. Presently the total length of the Chattooga Trail is 41.7 miles. Beginning at the Highway 76 Bridge the trail goes north for 20.2 miles on the Georgia side of the river then crosses the Highway 28 bridge to the South Carolina side for the remaining 16.1 miles to Ellicott Rock. While the total length of this section of the Chattooga River Trail is 36.3 miles it ends in a wilderness area at Ellicott Rock. This means that you must hike out from that point. The shortest hike out is 3.3 miles on the Bad Creek Trail making the total hiking distance at least 39.6 miles. The entire trail is kept in good repair. There's the occasional windfall and occasionally a tiny stream that must be crossed by rock hopping. Steep places usually have switchbacks so that virtually all of the trail is gently sloping, level or easy up and down. I have met hikers that hike the 20.2 miles south of the Highway 28 bridge in one day. This isn't difficult but is much too speedy for my style of hiking. It leaves little time for nature appreciation, photography or rest stops of more than a few minutes. I recommend a total distance of 8 to 10 miles for a regular day hike. Longer daylight hours and good weather conditions can allow for longer day hikes. The trail is easily divided into several sections by eight direct access points that have parking suitable for setting a shuttle –

	<i>hike miles</i>
Highway 76 bridge to Sandy Ford Road (GA).....	9.9
Sandy Ford Road (GA) to Earls Ford Road (GA).....	3.5
Earls Ford Road (GA) to Highway 28 Bridge .....	6.8
Highway 28 Bridge to Lick Log Creek .....	4.2
Lick Log Creek to Burrells Ford .....	8.1
Bull Pen Road Bridge to Whiteside Cove Road.....	5.4



The Chattooga River Trail does not continue downstream of the Highway 76 bridge and no riverside trails continue upstream from the northern end of the trail at Ellicott Rock. A trail, Bad Creek Trail, does continue beyond Ellicott Rock but it veers away from the river to the east then north to Bull Pen Road. A disjunct section of the Chattooga River Trail, river right, goes upstream along the river from the Bull Pen Bridge but is most often referred to as the Section 00 (double zero) Trail. See *Section 00 Trail page 12*. There is a vague trail going downriver from the Highway 76 bridge on the South Carolina side of the river see *Screaming Left Turn, page 43*.



**Bartram Trail** *map left*

The Bartram Trail is internationally known and is named for the famous American naturalist William Bartram (1739–1823). Even after reading much about Bartram and some of his writings I had always thought he was a European. Don't know where I got that. He was born in Kingsessing, Pennsylvania a suburb of Philadelphia. For many years Bartram explored much of the southeastern United States. No one knows exactly where he traveled but the many miles of foot trails and canoe trails named after him are supposed to replicate his travels. The Bartram Trail enters our area from the northwest at the summit of Scaly Mountain. Here the Eastern Continental Divide separates the Tennessee River watershed from the Chattooga River watershed. Going south from Scaly Mountain, the Bartram Trail crosses Rabun Bald, continues on to Warwoman Dell then eastward where it joins the Chattooga River Trail at Sandy Ford Road. Both trails are then contiguous all the way to the Highway 28 Chattooga River Bridge. At Ridley Fields (SC) there is some confusion but it does continue beyond this point. It is still congruent with the Chattooga River Trail until it joins the Foothills Trail at the Lock Log Falls area and ends at Oconee State Park.

**Foothills Trail** *maps page 18, 68*

Only 17.4 miles of this trail is within our area. It begins at Tamassee Knob near Oconee State Park and goes north and west through Oconee State Park. Here the trail shares its name with the Bartram Trail and enters our area at Highway 107 and Cheohee Road. There is parking at this trailhead. The trail crosses Highway 107, skirts around the southern end of Morton Mountain then heads north paralleling Nicholson Ford Road. At 1.3 miles there is a Nicholson Ford Road trailhead; a pull-out with a Carsonite sign and a sign "Foothills Trail .2". From here it's only 0.7 miles on to Lick Log Falls where it joins the Chattooga River Trail. The Lick Log Falls area is a confusing web of trails; pay attention to the signage here. Going north, the next 8.9 miles to Burrells Ford, is congruent with the Chattooga River Trail. More confusion at Burrells Ford; check the map. Many hikers prefer the lower riverside trail (Chattooga River Trail). It adds 0.5 miles to the 3.9 mile hike to Fish Hatchery Road but passes a spur trail up to Spoon Auger Falls. If you take this lower trail there is a Carsonite sign directing you to the Foothills Trail. The trail crosses the top of Medlin Mountain on its way to a small pull-out on Fish Hatchery Road. From there it continues northward 3.3 miles up to Sloan Bridge where it leaves our area and goes east to the Whitewater Falls area.

### Bartram Trail Mileage

Scaly Mountain.....	0.0	
Osage Mountain Overlook.....	1.9	1.9
Hale Ridge Road.....	2.8	4.7
Beegum Gap Trail Junction.....	2.1	6.8
Beegum Gap Jeep Trail Junction.....	0.5	7.3
Rabun Bald.....	0.7	8.0
Three Forks Trail Junction.....	0.0	8.0
Wilson Knob.....	2.6	10.6
Wilson Gap.....	1.5	12.1
Martin Creek Falls.....	4.2	17.5
Becky Branch Falls.....	0.2	18.6
Warwoman Dell.....	1.8	18.8
Pool Creek Road.....	4.0	22.8
Sandy Ford Road.....	3.4	26.2
Chattooga River Trail (70 yards).....	0.0	26.2

### Chattooga River Trail Mileage

Highway 76 Bridge trailhead.....	0.0	
Indian Trail.....	0.5	0.5
Eight Ball Trail.....	2.1	2.6
Thrifts Ferry.....	1.7	4.3
Lick Log Creek (GA).....	2.6	6.9
Hippie Beach Trail.....	0.1	7.0
Rock Creek.....	2.9	9.9
Sandy Ford Road (20 yards).....	0.0	9.9
Bartram Trail Intersection.....	0.7	10.6
Dicks Creek bridge.....	0.3	10.9
Earls Ford Road.....	2.5	13.4
Warwoman Creek bridge.....	0.3	13.7
West Fork bridge.....	6.2	19.9
Highway 28 Bridge.....	0.3	20.2
Ridley Fields trailhead.....	0.2	20.4
Junction with Upper Trail.....	2.4	22.8
Ira Branch.....	0.4	23.2
Nicholson Ford.....	0.3	23.5
Lick Log Creek (SC).....	0.9	24.4
Crack in Rock Hole in Wall.....	2.5	26.9
Big Bend Falls.....	1.8	28.7
Big Bend Road Trail.....	0.8	29.5
King Creek.....	2.5	32.0
Burrells Ford Parking.....	0.5	32.5
Burrells Ford Road trailhead.....	0.3	32.8
Foothills Trail Intersection.....	0.5	33.3
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Bad Creek.....	0.7	35.1
Ellicott Rock.....	1.2	36.3

Bull Pen Bridge.....	0.0	
Cane Creek.....	1.8	1.8
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Norton Mill Creek.....	0.6	2.8
Whiteside Cove Road Trailhead.....	2.6	5.4

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Highway 107 at Cheohee Road.....	0.0	0.0
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## Chattooga River Rapids and Places

A simple list of the rapids, streams and places along the Chattooga River in order from top to bottom. Defining the river sections seems to be a matter of opinion. Here – section 00 (double zero) is the Chattooga River above Burrells Ford Bridge. Section 0 (zero) is from Burrells Ford Bridge to the Highway 28 Bridge. For paddlers, the West Fork (Section 1) begins at the Overflow Creek Road Campground upstream of Warwoman Road Bridge. Section 2 begins at the Highway 28 bridge but for paddlers it begins at the Highway 28 put-in. Some say Section 3 ends at the Highway 76 bridge while others say Woodall Shoals. I'm not sure who it is that officially recognizes or determines these section definitions. Not all stream confluences are listed.

### Section 00

- Chattooga Narrows, Upper Chattooga Narrows
- Norton Mill Creek confluence
- Chattooga Cliffs
- Rapid Under the Bridge, Upto Armpits in Potholes
- Bull Pen Bridge
- Ellicott Rock
- Bad Creek confluence
- Confluence with East Fork Chattooga River
- Burrells Ford Bridge

### Section 0

- Burrells Ford Bridge
- Burrells Ford Campground
- Burrells Ford
- Big Bend Falls
- Crack in the Rock Hole in the Wall
- Maytag
- Harvey Wallbanger
- Rock Gorge
- Lick Log Creek confluence
- Nicholson Ford
- Reed Creek Confluence
- Highway 28 Bridge
- West Fork Chattooga River confluence

### Section 1 – West Fork

- Three Forks
- Overflow Creek Road Bridge
- West Fork Campground/Put-in
- Warwoman Road Bridge
- Dam Sluice
- Big Slide
- Bartram Trail Footbridge
- Confluence with Chattooga River
- Highway 28 takeout

### Section 2

- Highway 28 put-in
- Long Bottom Ford
- Turn Hole
- Big Shoals (class 2)
- Five Ledges, Stair Step
- Earls Ford takeout

### Section 3

- Earls Ford put-in
- Warwoman Rapids, Turn Back Rapid (class 2, 3)
  - First Ledge and Second Ledge
- First Island Rapid (class 2)
- Rock Garden (class 1, 2, 3)
- Three Rooster Tails (class 3)
- Dicks Creek Ledge, First Ledge (class 3, 4)
- Dicks Creek Confluence
- Dicks Creek Falls, Five Fingers Falls
- Double Drop, Fickle Finger (class 3)

Double Drop Island  
 Sandy Ford Rapid (class 3)  
 Sandy Ford  
 Whetstone Creek confluence  
 Chattooga Narrows (class 3, 4)  
 Sanddragon Beach  
 Second Ledge (class 3)  
 Catfish Bottoms  
 Eye of the Needle, Yankee Stadium (class 3)  
 Blue Tag  
 Hippie Beach  
 Fall Creek put-in  
 Fall Creek confluence, Fall Creek Falls  
 Roller Coaster (class 3)  
 Keyhole, Painted Rock (class 3)  
 Thrifts Ferry  
 Swimmers Rapid, Thrifts Ferry Rapid (class 2)  
 Eight Ball (class 2)  
 Kick in the Butt, Boot in the Butt (class 2)  
 Hounds Tooth  
 Shallows  
 Shallows Camp Beach  
 Surprise Rapid (class 2)  
 Yellow Jacket Beach  
 Bull Sluice (class 4, 5)  
     Picnic Rock, Grill Rock  
     Georgia Rock  
     Decapitation Rock, Decap  
     Mermaid Rock  
     Photographers Rock, Photo Rock  
 Pole Creek  
 Mr. Joker Grotto  
 Highway 76 takeout

**Section 4**

Highway 76 put-in  
 Highway 76 Bridge  
 Water level gage  
 Electronic water level gage  
 Surfing Rapid, Surf Rapid (class 3)  
 Screaming Left Turn (class 3)  
 Reedy Branch confluence  
 Bump, Bump in the Butt, High Water Hole (class 2)  
 S-Turn (class 2)  
 Rock Jumble (class 3)  
 Suttons Hole  
 Woodall Shoals Rapid (class 6), cheat chute (class 3)  
 Woodall Shoals launch beach.

Hurricane Rapid (class 3)  
 Nazi Lunch Beach  
 Seven Foot Falls (class 4)  
 Zeus Sluice, Zoo Sluice (class 3)  
 Beaver Skull  
 Stekoa Creek  
 Stekoa Creek Rapid (class 3)  
 Cliff Creek  
 Long Creek Falls  
 Deliverance Rock  
 Deliverance Rapid (class 3)  
 Turtle Head Rock (class 2)  
 Raven Chute (class 3, 4)  
 Raven Rock  
 The Tunnel, Tunnel of Love  
 Easy Like Sunday Morning (class 2)  
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 Gazelle Rock, Smoking Gazelle Rock  
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 Little Woodall Beach  
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**Addendum**

It has become obvious that street signs, Forest Service signs and other directional signs are being removed from numerous places in our area. It is believed by many that the Forest Service is continually updating Forest Service signs so some signs may be only temporarily missing. These include the large brown and yellow signs and trailhead signs. For reasons not exactly clear, vandals often remove street signs, trail signs and other markers. Some use the signs to decorate their patio, den or bedroom. This could actually result in a fatality should a rescue vehicle be delayed because a sign was missing. Signs that are deep within the forests such as those along trails seem to have a longer life. Businesses in our area are constantly getting visitors asking for directions to our waterfalls and other scenic spots. Following these directions they then discover that

the signs they were told to follow are missing. I regularly meet hikers that need directions, are on the wrong trail or are unable to find the correct trail. The Chattooga River attracts visitors year round and is one of our most important resources. Good signage will help. Our National Forests were established to protect and preserve our natural wonders and make them available for all of us to enjoy. Politicians seeking to improve tourism often contract agencies to install signs advertizing or directing visitors to places of interest. The signs are quite gaudy and do little to help visitors find a trailhead. Many of them only create confusion and cause visitors to take fruitless detours in an effort to see the advertized attraction.

When following directions in this booklet remember that any of the signs mentioned may at any given time be missing.

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April 2, 2015

The Hiker's Guide to the Chattooga is given freely to anyone interested in our area. It is not for sale or reprint for profit. It is available only on CD, DVD, flash drive or other computer media and is online as a downloadable PDF. It has no advertisements, viruses or malicious content and is updated and reposted monthly. For a link email [chattoogahiker@gmail.com](mailto:chattoogahiker@gmail.com). A DVD with the guide and additional documents and pictures can be purchased at the Backwoods Community Shoppe in Long Creek, SC (a non-profit).

CNPS documents are compiled from research data collected by the Chattooga Native Plant Society and other researchers. The sole purpose is to catalog the plants, animals and scenic locations of our area. Some data may conflict with data of other researchers. All drawings, charts, maps, fonts and photographs are the property of Chattooga Native Plant Society. The Chattooga Native Plant Society does not accept monetary contributions but does appreciate contributions of information related to our area.

## Chattooga Native Plant Society

191 Daffodil Hill Road  
 Mountain Rest, SC 29664  
[chattoogahiker@gmail.com](mailto:chattoogahiker@gmail.com)