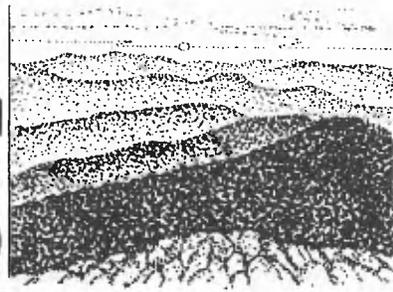


TENNESSEE TRAILS

The monthly newsletter of the Tennessee Trails Association



EXPERIMENTAL BLACK BEAR REINTRODUCTION IN BIG SOUTH FORK RECREATION AREA

In 1987 the Tennessee Bear and Boar Association approached the National Park Service (NPS) and Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency (TWRA) about the possibility of conducting a black bear restoration project in the Big South Fork region of the State of Tennessee. In order to address this request, officials of 5 state and federal agencies (NPS, TWRA, Kentucky Dept. of Fish and Wildlife Resources, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service), commissioned a research project by the University of Tennessee to determine habitat quality and the feasibility of reintroducing black bears into the Big South Fork area.

During 1989 and 1990 researchers from the University of Tennessee conducted a habitat evaluation of the Big South Fork area and its potential for supporting a viable black bear population. The study determined that the most important habitat components for bears were the abundance of summer and fall foods, protective cover and winter denning sites, and the potential level of human influence. Researchers found that the habitat in this area provides adequate amounts of summer foods, such as huckleberries and blackberries. Fall foods, primarily acorns, are also abundant, and because of the age of the forest, the potential for production of these foods will continue to increase over the next 5-10 years. Escape cover, mostly dense vegetation, is important for these secretive animals and also was found to be sufficiently available. During hibernation, black bears may use a variety of sites as winter dens, and the abundance of rock crevices and overhangs in the Big South Fork region should provide ample denning opportunities.

The habitat evaluation also found that high levels of human activities in this area may have adverse impacts on a bear population. The generally shy nature of black bears causes them to avoid people as a rule, and excessive disturbance can result in less than optimal utilization of the available habitat.

Timetable/Specifics of Experimental Reintroduction

1. The project will begin in the summer of 1993 and conclude with a final report in December 1995.
2. Black bears will be obtained from the Great Smoky Mountains National Park.
3. Only bears with no prior history of nuisance behavior will be used for reintroduction.
4. A total of 12 black bears will be released, 7 adult females and 5 males.
5. All released bears will be equipped with radio transmitters. Upon release, bears will be located daily until a home range is established, then twice weekly for the remainder of the study.
6. Bears will be released in the No Business Ridge area of the Big South Fork.

July 1993

Upon completion of the study, there will be an evaluation of the success of the project and a determination if a full scale reintroduction effort is warranted. Criterion for the success of the experimental reintroduction will include several factors. Over the short term, the following criterion will apply: 1) the majority (more than 75%) of released bears successfully establish home ranges within or in close proximity of the Big South Fork region; 2) damage complaints as the result of nuisance behavior by released bears should remain at minimal levels; 3) continued support for the project by the general public. On a long term basis, additional criterion should apply: 1) the majority (greater than 75%) of adult females reproduce within 3-4 years; 2) an overall stable self-sustaining bear population be established within 5 years.

The agencies involved in this project are in the process of soliciting comments and input from the general public. Please take the time to voice your opinion on this proposed project by sending your comments to one of the following state agencies:

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
Wildlife Division
P. O. Box 40747
Nashville, TN 37204
(615) 781-6610

Kentucky Dept. of Fish/Wildlife Resources
Bear Proposal
Division of Wildlife
Number 1, Game Farm Rd.
Frankfort, KY 40601
(502) 564-4406

Questions & Answers About Black Bears

Are black bears native to this area?

Black bears once roamed over all of Kentucky and Tennessee, including the Big South Fork area, but were eliminated from many areas due to unregulated hunting and habitat destruction. Now they exist only in the Appalachian Mountains in the eastern portions of Tennessee and Kentucky.

Why should we restore black bears to the Big South Fork area?

Black bears were once part of the natural systems operating within the area and federal policy of land management dictates that native species should be restored to former ranges when it is feasible to do so. Black bears represent many things to many people. Some people may view them negatively, and as the source of various potential problems, and others may view them as an economic bonus to the area, attracting tourists to the Big South Fork. But ultimately, black bears are a symbol of wild areas and the intangible benefits associated with these areas.

What has changed to allow them to survive in this area now?

The major change that has occurred in the last 50 years is the public acquisition of 200,000 acres of land under federal ownership and protection. In addition to the changes in land ownership, people's attitudes have changed over time as well, and they may now be more willing to accept the presence of the black bear.

How large of an area do black bears need?

On average, female bears will range over 5-15 square miles and males over 15-30 square miles. In order to establish a population of bears in the Big South Fork area, it is estimated that 50,000-100,000 acres of habitat will be needed.

Are black bears dangerous?

All large mammals have the potential to be dangerous. However, black bears are usually shy and secretive animals (unlike their more aggressive cousins, the grizzlies). There has never been a documented fatality in the southeast as a result of a bear attack. However, bears that have become conditioned to consuming human foods can lose their fear of humans and cause property damage or injuries. Making loud noises such as banging on metal objects or talking loudly, can be effective in scaring away bears.

What can I do to avoid possible problems from black bears?

If you are camping in bear country, be sure to keep all food in a secure place; most often this means

hanging food in a tree at least 10 feet in the air. Also, bear proof containers can be used to store food. Food should be stored in separate sacks or containers, and not in backpacks or tents.

Will the black bears be hunted?

There will be no bear hunting during the experimental phase of the project. If the project is successful and a huntable population is established, bear seasons will be implemented where and when appropriate in Tennessee and Kentucky.

What will happen if one of the study bears leaves the Big South Fork area?

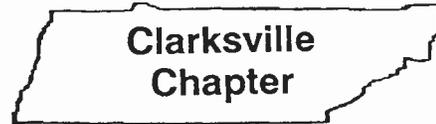
If a study bear leaves the confines of the National Recreation Area or National Forest and ventures onto private property, it will be monitored closely to determine its movements and activities. If the bear causes no problems, it will be allowed to move at will. If it begins to create problems, it will be recaptured by the study team and removed from the area.

Will any roads be closed during this study?

Even though road density has been identified as a possible limiting factor in this project, there are no plans to recommend additional road closures at this time. The road situation will be evaluated during the study, and further recommendations will be made at the conclusion of the study.

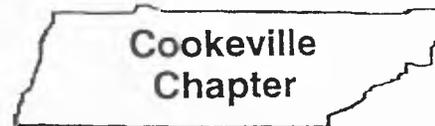


CHAPTER NEWS

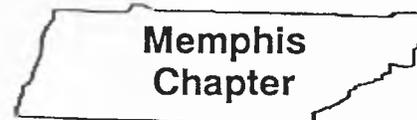


Meets the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. in the Community Room at Governor's Square Mall.

July 24 - Hiwassee and Tellico Rivers. Call Roger Greer at (615) 648-8769.



Call Chapter chairperson, Jack Murphy at (615) 537-9827 for details of meeting date and location for July.



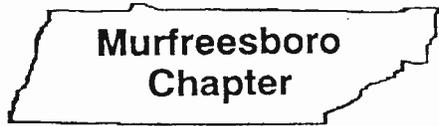
No meeting in July. Join us for the August picnic--details in next issue.

July 18 (Sunday) - Canoe Trip on Spring River in Hardy, Arkansas. Meet at 10 a.m. at Spring River Oaks. If you leave Memphis about 6:30 a.m., you'll

be up there in time, or you can come up the night before--there's plenty of camping in the area. The outfitter charges about \$24 per canoe. For more information, call Paul Goldstein, (901) 323-7248. (Do NOT call Ray Burkett, who's listed on the annual schedule--he'll be out of town.)

**TRIP REPORT
MUD ISLAND AND HARBORTOWN WALK**

On a hot, muggy Memphis Sunday afternoon, 17 TTA members and visitors met by the river at the north end of Mud Island. We were joined by Eric Perkins and camera crew of WHBQ TV station, and they stayed with us for part of the walk, talking to members and filming scenery along the way. We enjoyed the afternoon by the river and then thru Harbortown where there are beautiful homes, flowers, water fountains and a great view of the Pyramid and downtown Memphis. It was a nice walk and a lot of fun, especially to see our group on HBQ TV Sports section on June 8th.



Meets the third Tuesday of each month at St. Mark's Methodist Church at 7:00 p.m. All are welcome.

July 24 - Stone Door Day Hike/Greeter Falls Swim. Call Heloise Shilstat (615) 896-6278.

TTA sends the deepest of heartfelt sympathy to Bertha Chrietzberg (Murfreesboro Chapter member) and John Clark in regard to the tragic death of their sister in Alabama recently.



Meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Cumberland Science Museum.

July 10-11 (changed from 7/17-18)- Rock Island State Park Swim and Camp-Out. Would you like to park your RV in a nice, full service campground, swim at a pretty white sand beach with hundreds of other people, and hike on trails alongside blueberry bushes laden with ripening fruit in the blazing hot July sun? You can do all this at Rock Island.

Or--you could pitch your tent in the overflow campground with a new, modern shower house, enjoy sunning on huge, flat rocks, and swimming and diving in clear, cold water down in the river gorge. No blueberries here. Would you settle for chilled watermelon?

This park is located on Highway 70S between Sparta and McMinnville. Join us for a day, or the whole weekend. Any questions, call Pat Anderson (615) 383-2355.

July 22 (Thursday) - Picnic at Seven Points Recreation Area on Percy Priest Lake. Instead of meeting at Cumberland Museum for a program this month, we'll eat, swim, relax, swat bugs and enjoy each other's company. A pavilion has been reserved for the day so come early and take a dip in the lake at the swimming beach. We will plan to eat between 7:00-7:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share and your beverage. We promise we won't make you mail the newsletter this time! (Last year we folded, stapled and stamped in the dark!)

TRAIL INSPECTIONS

Each month in the TTA newsletter I look at all the hikes listed across the state and think how wonderful it would be to go on these, but time and distance do not permit. However, I would like to encourage those who do go to provide an inspect-a-trail form to either Bob Barnett or myself. You do not have to perform actual maintenance but just let someone know of any problems you may encounter such as lost signs, inaccurate maps, bridges needing repair, overgrown sections of trail, etc. This would be helpful since those in charge of these trails cannot always get out and walk them regularly. We can also let them know if things are fine and that we appreciate their efforts to keep them this way. Trails that are in good condition will attract more hikers, especially those new to hiking and outdoor activities.

It is sometimes hard to find time to send in this information, but perhaps the trip leader or another person on the hike would assume responsibility for this. If anyone wishes to adopt a trail or do work on an existing trail, please contact Bob Barnett or myself for needed help and/or information. It is a good idea to talk to those in charge of your trail and work with them. We in the Memphis chapter have found it helpful to put at least one work day on our schedule so everyone can have advance notice and plan for it. We also go out at least one other day during the year and do trail work as there is always something to be done. Thanks to all of you who contribute your time and effort in helping promote hiking and working on trails across our state.

Now, if someone would check out canoe trips and let me know where the snakes are waiting to fall in Betty's and my canoe, we'll be in business!

Jerri Bull
Adopt-A-Trail Coordinator

News From Our State Parks South Cumberland Recreation Area (615) 924-2980 or 2956

July 3 - Meadow Trail Walk. Meet at the Visitor Center at 5:00 p.m. 2 miles roundtrip, easy.

July 10 - Fishing Rodeo! Register at Grundy Lakes Beach starting at 5:00 a.m. (that's not a typo!) for informal competitive fishing. Prizes will be awarded in several categories.

July 10 - Greeter Gulf Rockhop. Meet at the Greeter Falls access at 10:00 a.m. Join Bill for this VERY strenuous but VERY spectacular exploration of the Greeter and Big Creek Gulfs. 5-6 hours, very strenuous.

July 11 - Lost Cove Cave Tour. Meet at the Carter Natural Area parking lot at 10:00 a.m. Bring lunch, drinking water, some type of hard hat and a flashlight. 5 miles roundtrip, strenuous.

July 17 - Greeter Falls Excursion. Meet at the Greeter Falls access at 10:00 a.m. A great swimming hole is featured! 2 miles roundtrip, moderate.

July 24 - Little Gizzard Creek Wade. Meet at Foster Falls parking lot at 1:00 p.m. Wade in the creek, check out the water critters, and stay cool on this easy 1/2 mile roundtrip outing.

July 25 - Boulder Crossing. Meet at the Savage Gulf Ranger Station. Tour the upper Collins Gulf. The boulders are huge and the area gorgeous. 3 miles roundtrip, strenuous.

July 31 - Tom Pack Falls Walk. Meet at the entrance to Franklin Forest near Sewanee. This is an easy but beautiful walk through diverse plateau woods, a small waterfall, an intricate rockshelter and an old growth forest. 1.5 miles roundtrip.

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Unless you have a Lifetime Membership in the Tennessee Trails Association, your membership expires on January 1 of each year. All TTA memberships are based on the calendar year and not one year from the month you join.

Please register me as a member for the calendar year 1993 (Jan-Dec) with the type membership checked below:

___ Student	\$ 6.00	MAIL DUES TO:
___ Individual/Family	15.00	Tennessee Trails Assn.
___ Supporting	\$30, \$40 or \$50	P. O. Box 41446
___ Life	150.00	Nashville, TN 37204

Students do not have voting privileges. Supporting members may be organizations or individuals. Each organization should designate a representative to cast its vote and up to three addresses to receive the newsletter. Family dependent members do receive a separate newsletter.

NAME: _____ DATE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP: _____

HOME PHONE: _____ WORK PHONE: _____

PLEASE LIST ME WITH CHAPTER _____ OR AT LARGE _____ HOW DID YOU HEAR ABOUT

TTA? _____

Mail dues, address changes/corrections, newsletter submissions and membership applications to:
All newsletter submissions are due by the 15th of each month.

TTA
P.O. Box 41446
Nashville, TN 37204

Objectives: To promote, construct, and maintain a statewide system of hiking trails, and to work for the conservation of natural resources inherent to this objective. Sponsor for the Cumberland Trail.

1993 TTA LEADERS

PRESIDENT:	Bob Barnett (615) 832-6484
VICE-PRESIDENT:	Tom Shepherd (615) 895-2098
CORR. SEC/TREAS:	Judy Van Cleve (615) 473-8136
SECRETARY:	Evelyn Tretter (615) 859-0566
IMMEDIATE PAST PRES:	Jerri Bull (901) 363-4408
BOARD REP:	James T. Jones (901) 422-1444
BOARD REP:	Bertha Chrietzberg (615) 896-1146
BOARD REP:	Sally Garrard (615) 646-4079
MEMBERSHIP:	Bob Barnett (615) 832-6484
CUMBERLAND TRAIL	
CHAIRMAN:	Bob Brown (615) 352-7474
Adopt-A-Trail:	Jerri Bull, Coordinator (901) 363-4408
	Bob Barnett, Coordinator (615) 832-6484
Cookeville Chapter:	Jack Murphy, (615) 537-9827
Murfreesboro Chapter:	Ron Ferrara, Chair, (615) 893-3515
Memphis Chapter:	Debbie Gilbert, Chair, (901) 454-0613
Nashville Chapter:	Bob Stephenson, Chair, (615) 672-4064
Clarksville Chapter:	Roger Greer, Chair, (615) 648-8769

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Come Hike With Us!
Tennessee Trails Association
P.O. Box 41446
Nashville, TN 37204

