



Flora, Fauna, and Fireflies

JUNE 5 – 11, 2010

Venture into the enchantment of Great Smoky Mountains National Park, with its rolling hills and surrounding tranquil farms. Each day of this unique tour is sure to captivate you, whether it's your first visit to the Smokies or you are a seasoned guest. Accompanied by Dr. Michael Pelton, creator of the world's longest-running bear study, we explore the history of the black bear in the Smokies. Witness the synchronous light patterns of the local fireflies and discover the diverse habitats of other distinctive Smokies animals. Attend private meetings each day with highly-regarded park wildlife experts for a behind-the-scenes look at park protection.

Highlights

GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NP —

One of our nation's most popular parks, Great Smoky Mountains protects the scenically spectacular and ecologically rich lands of western North Carolina and eastern Tennessee. NPCA takes you behind the scenes at several prominent park destinations and to several lesser known jewels as well.

EXPERT GUIDES—

Learn from knowledgeable Park Service biologists and your expert study leader, Dr. Michael R. Pelton. Pelton is professor emeritus of wildlife science at University of Tennessee.

LUXURY ACCOMMODATIONS—

Experience the warm southern hospitality of Blackberry Farm and the Swag Country Inn. Each property boasts pampering accommodations, award-winning cuisine, and incredible views.

ABOVE: SUNSET IN GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK, TENNESSEE © MIKE WEIDMAN/DREAMSTIME.
OPPOSITE PAGE: JOHN OLIVER'S CABIN IN CADES COVE, GREAT SMOKY MOUNTAINS NATIONAL PARK © MICHAEL SANDERS, ENVIRONMENTAL ADVENTURE COMPANY.

Trip Details

NPCA MEMBER PRICE: \$6,295 per person double occupancy; \$895 single supplement.

DEPOSIT: \$500 per person

PRICE INCLUDES: All accommodations, meals as noted (B-Breakfast, L-Lunch, D-Dinner), ground transportation, professional guide services, park and other entrance fees, and miscellaneous program expenses.

PRICE DOES NOT INCLUDE: Roundtrip airfare to and from destination, gratuities for guides, alcoholic beverages, or personal expenses.

PAYMENTS/CANCELLATIONS: Space is confirmed by calling the NPCA at 800.628.7275. A \$500 per person deposit is due at registration. Final payment will be invoiced separately and is due 90 days prior to departure. Cancellation notice must be submitted in writing and is effective upon date of receipt. Cancellations up to 85 days prior to departure are subject to a \$150 per person handling fee. Cancellations 84-57 days prior to departure result in full loss of deposit. Cancellations 56-28 days prior to departure result in the loss of 50% of your total cost. Cancellations within 28 days of departure result in the loss of 100% of your total cost.

TRAVEL INSURANCE: To protect yourself from the loss of deposit and cancellation fees, you are encouraged to purchase travel insurance. If you need assistance, NPCA recommends contacting Travel Insurance Services.

ARRIVE/DEPART: Knoxville, Tennessee

LENGTH OF TOUR: 7 days/6 nights

PACE: Easy to moderately active, offering a choice of activities each day to suit different activity levels and interests.

Daily Itinerary

JUNE 5: ARRIVALS IN KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Enchanted by the rolling hills and beautiful farms, learn in your first views how this region got its name. Our destination for the first half of our week is Blackberry Farm, one of America's most celebrated luxury hotels. Situated on a pastoral estate, Blackberry Farm welcomes our group with charming cottages and estate rooms and world-renown cuisine. Our afternoon discussion with the creator of the black bear research project, Dr. Michael Pelton, features population density and distribution, habitat preferences, and current trends of the park's black bears. *Blackberry Farm (D)*

JUNE 6: CADES COVE, GREAT SMOKY NATIONAL PARK

Accompanied by Dr. Michael Pelton, we travel through some of the last remaining old-growth timber park sections to Cades Cove, an area rich with wildlife and cultural history. Cades Cove is the best location for observing wildlife and wildflowers, and who better to explore it with than the project creator himself. With some luck and spotting scopes, we view American black bears and their cubs near this quaint meadow community. Complete the evening observing the Smokies' synchronous fireflies with the scientist who discovered this unique species. *Blackberry Farm (B,L,D)*

JUNE 7: APPALACHIAN BEAR CENTER

After breakfast, we visit the Appalachian Bear Center to witness first-hand some of the center's truly inspirational work. The Appalachian Bear Center has assisted orphaned black bears for years and reintroduced them into the wild with minimal human impact. Later, we will enjoy a presentation by Friends of the Smokies to learn of other numerous research projects and their role. *Blackberry Farm (B,L,D)*

JUNE 8: GREAT SMOKY NATIONAL PARK

Meet a park biologist in Cataloochee Valley to search for and learn about the park's most recent reintroduced species – the elk. Later, discuss the park's wild pig population and their unique management strategy. Turn over rocks, get a little wet, and find one of the park's beautiful amphibians – the salamander. Then head to the area's premier country inn and our accommodations for the next several evenings. *The Swag Country Inn (B,L,D)*

JUNE 9: NEWFOUND GAP & APPALACHIAN TRAIL

Travel back to Newfound Gap, where a short hike on the Appalachian Trail shows evidence of the destructive impacts made by the wild boar, introduced for sportsmen years ago. Before descending the mountain back to the lowlands, we visit Clingman's Dome, Tennessee's highest point at 6,643 feet. The observation tower affords an unsurpassed view of this national park and a bird's eye view of each park destination covered this week. *The Swag Country Inn (B,L,D)*

JUNE 10: CHIMNEY TOPS PICNIC AREA, GREAT SMOKY NATIONAL PARK

An easy hike to some of the park's important research areas allows the opportunity to learn about wildlife by examining animal sign through scat and tracks. Along the way, we stop at the Chimneys Picnic Area, a poorly planned location known for the devastating effects it has had on black bears from the impact of feeding by humans. Returning to our lodge for the evening, we will enjoy a reception and farewell dinner. *The Swag Country Inn (B,L,D)*

JUNE 11: DEPARTURES FROM KNOXVILLE, TENNESSEE

Travel to the airport in Knoxville for return flights. (B)

Wildlife Ecology



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National Parks Conservation Association®
Protecting Our National Parks for Future Generations®

To learn more or make a reservation, call us toll-free 800.628.7275, email travel@npca.org, or visit www.npcap.org/fireflies.