



PHOTO BY JEWELL WILSON

Named for the slick rocks at its top and bottom, Slick Rock Falls is located near Brevard. A cattle trail crossed near the top of the falls and occasionally a stray cow would get carried over the falls.

THE MAGIC OF WATERFALLS

There's something magical about watching the crystal clear water of a mountain stream dancing over rocks. The sense of awe magnifies as the water plunges over a cliff.

Perhaps you're drawn to waterfalls because you can't see them just anywhere, or maybe there's something enticing about being near the awesome power of falling water.

STAY ON TRAIL: Getting too close to the falls is a real danger. Wet rocks are often slick, and a slip above a waterfall can be fatal. Stay on the trail to safely experience the sights and sounds of these spectacular waterfalls:

HIGHLANDS AREA

Whitewater Falls: At 411 feet, highest falls east of the Rockies. Falls plunge over Blue Ridge Escarpment—sharp drop in elevation between mountains and Piedmont. From Cashiers, take NC 107 south 10 miles to NC-SC line. Go a mile and take first road to left. Turn left on SC 130. (fee site; D-6 on map)

Silver Run Falls: A 30-foot waterfall spills into a pool of water. Off NC 107, 4.1 miles south of Cashiers. Park in pull-off on left and take a short, easy trail to base of falls. (D-6 on map)

Dry Falls: Walk behind this 75-foot falls without getting wet! Off U.S. 64, 3.5 miles east of Highlands, 16.5 miles west of Highlands, 16.5 miles east of Franklin in the Cullasaja views of the waterfall. Accessible, elevated observation deck. A new stairway, which is easier to climb, connects to original paved path that travels under the waterfall.

Bridal Veil Falls: 120-foot waterfall off U.S. 64, 2.5 miles west of Highlands in Cullasaja Gorge. Built in 1920s, U.S. 64 originally passed under Bridal Veil Falls. (C-6 on map)

Lower Cullasaja Falls: A cascading waterfall about 250 feet high. Off U.S. 64, 11 miles east of Franklin, nine miles west of Highlands. Visible from car. Do not stop car in road. (D-6 on map)

Glen Falls: A steep one-mile trail offers spur trails that lead to three large 60-foot falls that make up Glen Falls. Trail allows views of Rabun Bald and Blue Valley. From Highlands, go three miles south on NC 106. Turn left on gravel road at sign. (D-6 on map)

Lower Satulah Falls: A high, narrow waterfall, visible from an overlook. Off U.S. 28, 2.5 miles south of Highlands. (D-6 on map)

BREVARD AREA

Looking Glass Falls: Visible from U.S. 276, steps lead down to Looking Glass Creek, where you often feel the mist from the 60-foot falls. From Brevard, take U.S. 276 north. (D-5 on map)

NEAR THE PARKWAY

Douglas Falls: Three-mile difficult trail to 50-foot waterfall, spills over the rockface. Towering hemlocks surround falls. Trail begins at Craggy Gardens parking lot off parkway. Difficult trail to waterfall, six miles round-trip.

FRANKLIN AREA

Big Laurel Falls: Pretty waterfall, located five miles past Standing Indian Campground. Easy, 0.5-mile trail to base of Big Laurel Falls. The path of an old logging railroad. (C-6 on map)

WILSON CREEK BACKCOUNTRY

South Harpers Creek Falls: A 200-foot magnificent waterfall with cascades. Follow 2.5-mile Harper Creek Trail, rated as moderate, runs by waterfall that pours into a 50-foot wide pool. Creek offers great fishing.

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North Harpers Creek Falls: From the North Harper Creek Trail, spot this 40-foot waterfall that drops into a 50-foot-wide pool.

BIG IVY AREA

Big Laurel Falls: Pretty waterfall, located five miles past Standing Indian Campground. Easy, 0.5-mile trail to base of Big Laurel Falls. The path of an old logging railroad. (C-6 on map)

FISHING & HUNTING: popular forest sports

Fishing and hunting—traditional recreation—are still popular today. Many game animals, such as deer, black bear and wild turkey thrive in North Carolina's national forests.

Miles of streams and dozens of lakes offer warm-water and cold-water fishing. Some waters are stocked, and others support wild fish.

While the Forest Service manages the habitat and protects water quality in the national forests, the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission regulates hunting and fishing. Any lands open to public hunting, such as national forests, the commission calls "game lands."

Every hunter and angler should get the annual Fishing, Hunting and Trapping Regulations Digest by calling 919-707-0030; write North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission, 512 N. Salisbury Street, Raleigh, NC 27604; or visit www.wildlife.state.nc.us and select "regulations."

SHOOTING RANGES

NANTAHALA NATIONAL FOREST

Atoah: This 100-yard range offers six shooting stations and is open year-round. Any target is allowed, except clay pigeons. No fee is charged. (Cheoah District: 828-479-6431)

Moss Knob: No fee is charged at this 150-yard range that offers six firing lanes and is open year-round. A four-car parking lot is available. (Nantahala District: 828-524-6441)

Panther Top: Open year-round, this range offers a covered shooting pad for six 100-yard firing lines for rifles and four 25-yard firing lines for pistols. The cost: \$2 user fee or \$25 season pass. (Tusquitee District: 828-837-5152)

Dirty John: Offering a 100-yard range with target frames at 7 yards, 25 yards, 50 yards and 100 yards. This range has six stations that are open year-round. The cost: \$3 per-car parking fee or \$7 annual pass. (Nantahala District: 828-524-6441.)

UWHARRIE NATIONAL FOREST

Flintlock Valley: Open year-round, this shooting range provides 50-yard pistol and 100-yard rifle ranges. Two shelters offer six shooting benches. The cost using range: a \$3 per-person-per-day fee or \$30 annual pass. (Uwharrie National Forest: 910-576-6391)

FOREST LODGING

Balsam Lake Lodge

Surrounded by the Blue Ridge Mountains on the Nantahala District, Balsam Lake Lodge offers a special getaway for groups who reserve the whole facility for \$170 to \$200 per night. The lodge includes 16 twin beds with linens, a kitchen with utensils and three bathrooms. All facilities are fully accessible. The lodge overlooks a lake where trails and fishing piers are fully accessible. To reserve the lodge, call 877-444-6777 or go online to recreation.gov.

Swan Cabin

For a primitive cabin experience, rent the Swan Cabin on the Cheoah District for \$25 per night. This 1931 three-room log cabin has one and a half stories and includes a loft, wood stove, and nine rope-strung bed frames for sleeping bags. Water is from a spring a quarter-mile away; a privy is out back. Make reservations after Jan. 1 each year through the reservation service at 877-444-6777 or visit: www.recreation.gov.