

Mount Jefferson State Natural Area

1481 Mt Jefferson State Park Rd
West Jefferson, NC 28694

336-246-9653

mount.jefferson@ncparks.gov

GPS: 36.397660, -81.473466



Activities

Education and Events: Rangers hold regularly scheduled educational and interpretive programs about Mount Jefferson State Natural Area. Contact the park office to arrange a special exploration for your group or class. Educational materials about Mount Jefferson State Natural Area have been developed for grades 5-7 and are correlated to North Carolina's competency-based curriculum. The Mount Jefferson program introduces students to basic geologic processes, rocks and minerals of the area.



Picnicking: The picnic area is located in a beautiful wooded location near the summit of Mount Jefferson. Facilities include 19 tables and eight grills. Also included is a six-table handicapped-accessible picnic shelter with a fireplace, large grill and drinking fountain. The shelter may be reserved. Restrooms (not handicapped accessible) are located nearby.



Trails: An investment of little more than an hour's time offers a high return as the beauty and diversity of the park are best seen while hiking along its trails.

Summit Trail: Beginning at the parking lot, Summit Trail passes through the picnic area and ascends 0.3 miles to the highest point on Mount Jefferson.

Rhododendron Trail: The strenuous 1.1-mile self-guided Rhododendron Trail follows a ridge southeast along the crest of the mountain from the summit to Luther Rock. Here, hikers may look back along the horseshoe-shaped ridge to the summit and tower. Beyond is a spectacular view of neighboring valleys and peaks. On clear days, the New River is visible to the east. Bluffs extend along the ridge below the trail where outcrops of amphibolite are visible in winter. The return segment of Rhododendron Trail descends the south side of the mountain. As this area is less exposed to the frigid winds of winter, the trees are larger than those on the ridge. The trail returns to the picnic area parking lot through a virgin forest of large northern red oaks and skeletons of American chestnuts.

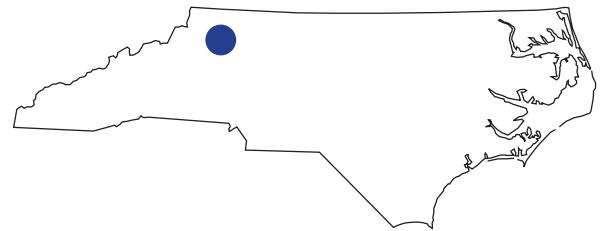
Track Trail: The Mount Jefferson Track Trail is the actual Rhododendron Trail loop, 1.1 miles. The Activity Brochure Kiosk is located in front of the bathhouse on the summit trail.

Lost Province Trail: Traveling 0.75 miles along the south-eastern facing slope of Mount Jefferson, the moderate trail explores a virgin oak/chestnut forest, providing views of false Solomon's seal and other understory species.

Mountain Ridge Trail: This trail offers the hikers beautiful views and an intimate trip through diverse plant communities, while enjoying the craftsmanship of native stone steps. As you enter the strenuous 2 mile trail from the park office, it ascends the mountain through each overlook, to the upper parking area.

Special Events: To hold a special event in the park or an event that does not fall within normal park activities, event organizers must complete a special activity permit. Visit the website or contact the park office for the permit.

Location



Mount Jefferson State Natural Area is in Ashe County on US 221 Bypass between the towns of Jefferson and West Jefferson. Follow the signs to the park.

Park Hours

North Carolina State Parks are open every day, with the exception of Christmas Day. Park hours vary with the seasons.

Please visit the North Carolina State Park website or contact the park office for the most current information about seasonal hours, activities, alerts, camping fees, programs rules and weather.

Call ahead before a visit in winter months; inclement weather often makes mountain roads impassable.

www.ncparks.gov

Make a reservation online at ncparks.gov
or call 1-877-722-6762.

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