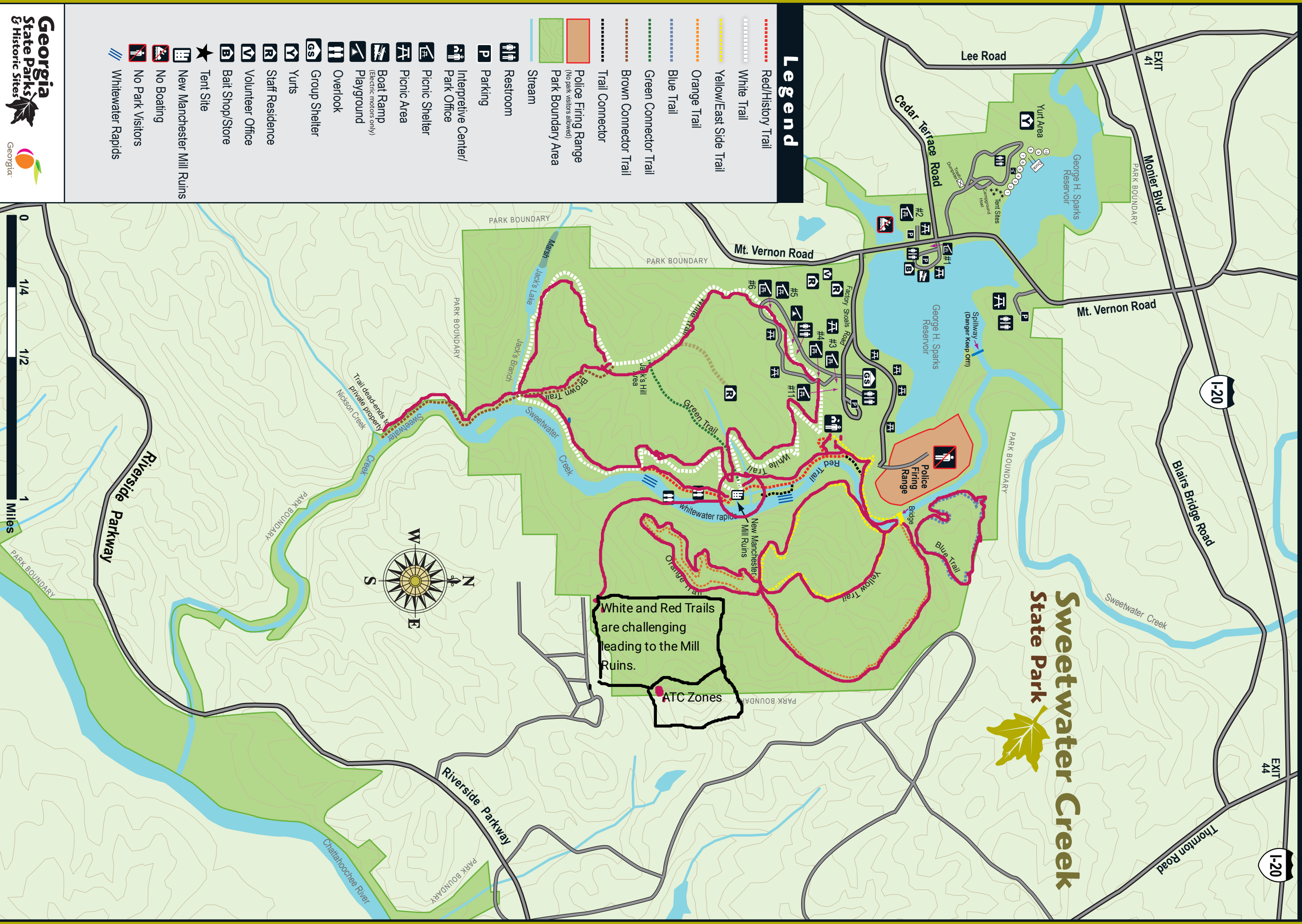


Sweetwater Creek State Park Trail Map

1750 Mt. Vernon Road, Lithia Springs, GA 30122 • Park: 770-732-5871 • Reservations: 1-800-864-7275 • GeorgiaStateParks.org

EMERGENCY NUMBERS: 911 or call/text 678-871-0792 • NOTICE: Please be advised that the park closes at dark.



Sweetwater Creek State Park

Sweetwater Creek State Park was opened in 1972 and encompasses 2,549 acres of land 15 miles west of Atlanta, Georgia. It is the most visited park in Georgia and just minutes from downtown Atlanta. For overnight accommodations, there is a yurt village with 10 yurts and 5 tent sites. The park offers a variety of natural, cultural, and recreational resources including hiking, picnicking, boating (electric motors only), and fishing. Seven maintained trails cover over 15 miles, highlighting most aspects of the park from ridge tops to creek valleys showcasing the many diverse plant communities and various cultural resources.

The trails are open from 7:00 a.m. to dark and are color-coded with blazes painted on the trees. The trailheads for all trails originate at the Interpretive Center/museum (open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) where you will find more trail information as well as exhibits on the natural and cultural resources of the park as well as a gift shop. These include exhibits on the Civil War, life in the mill town of New Manchester, green buildings, and the plants and animals of the park. Water, restrooms, snacks, drinks, gifts and souvenirs are also available here. The Interpretive Center is one of the most environmentally responsible buildings anywhere, having achieved the U.S. Green Building Council's highest possible rating (LEED-NC Platinum).

Sweetwater Creek rises in Paulding County and has a large drainage basin of 250 square miles. After it enters the park, it begins to fill with rapids near the mill ruins (up to class IV+). Here, Sweetwater Creek drops 120 feet in elevation on its race to the Chattahoochee River. This mile-long stretch of whitewater rapids is a favorite area for many hikers on the red and white trails. The direction of the river flow within the park is strongly influenced by the geology, as the river changes direction often as it encounters resistant rock.

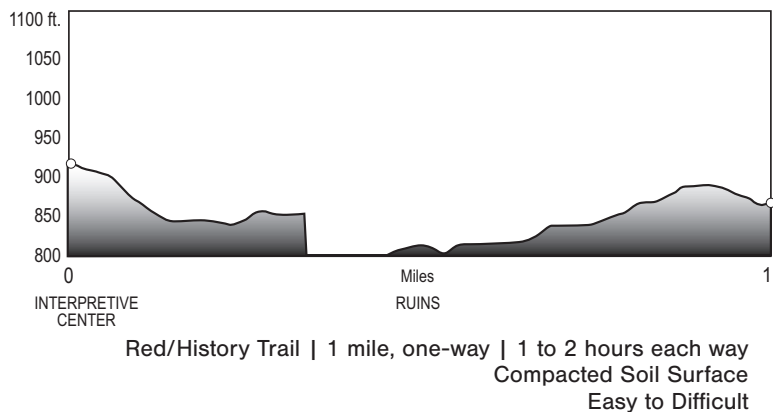
The park offers a diverse range of plant habitats, from river bottomlands and marshes to upland forests and open meadows. Wildflowers are generally abundant from late winter/early spring until late fall.

The plentiful water of George H. Sparks Reservoir and Sweetwater Creek, along with the many diverse habitats of the park, also make it attractive to birds and bird watchers.

For more information about Sweetwater Creek State Park, please go to GeorgiaStateParks.org/SweetwaterCreek or call the park at 770-732-5871.

Climate Data for Lithia Springs, GA

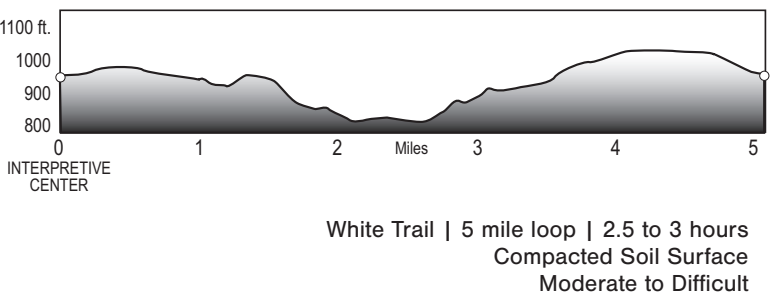
Month	Avg. High	Avg. Low	Avg. Mean	Avg. Precip.	Record High	Record Low
Jan	50°F	28°F	39°F	5.82 in	80°F (2002)	-12°F(1985)
Feb	55°F	31°F	43°F	5.08 in	80°F (1989)	-2°F (1996)
Mar	64°F	38°F	51°F	5.94 in	86°F (1995)	7°F (1960)
Apr	72°F	45°F	59°F	4.50 in	93°F (1986)	21°F (1987)
May	79°F	54°F	66°F	4.32 in	96°F (1996)	32°F (1966)
Jun	86°F	62°F	74°F	4.25 in	101°F (1988)	40°F (1984)
Jul	89°F	66°F	78°F	4.59 in	104°F (1980)	50°F (1967)
Aug	88°F	65°F	77°F	4.40 in	103°F (1983)	48°F (1968)
Sep	83°F	59°F	71°F	3.60 in	99°F (1970)	30°F (1967)
Oct	73°F	46°F	60°F	3.38 in	92°F (1971)	22°F (1965)
Nov	63°F	38°F	51°F	4.21 in	86°F (1968)	9°F (1970)
Dec	54°F	31°F	42°F	4.34 in	79°F (1984)	-4°F (1962)



Red/History Trail

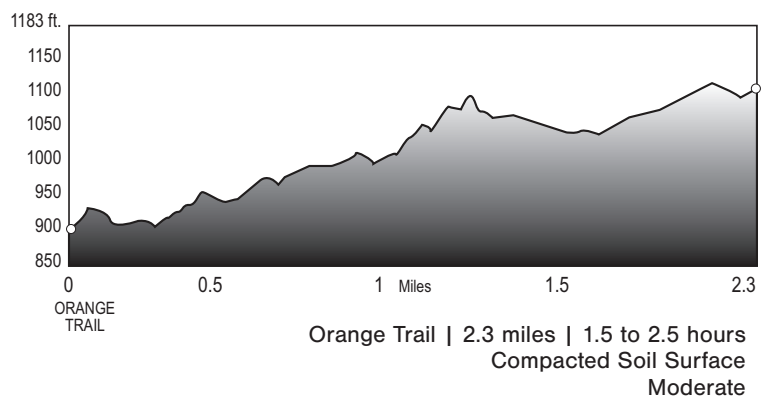
The Red Trail, after half a mile, takes you to the impressive five-story New Manchester mill ruins alongside the whitewater rapids of Sweetwater Creek, and is the recommended hike for first-time visitors. New Manchester was a mid-nineteenth century mill town which met its demise during the Civil War after the burning of the mill in 1864. A free history guide for the Red Trail is available in the Interpretive Center. The second half-mile of the Red Trail, downstream of the mill, continues downstream alongside the largest rapid (Class IV+) at the one mile mark where it connects with the White Trail and is considerably more strenuous because of the very rocky terrain.

The Red Trail is the most frequently used trail in the park because it is the shortest trail to the mill ruins and best showcases the beauty of the creek valley.



White Trail

The White Trail is a 5 mile loop that passes through some of the most remote areas of the park. It intersects with the Red Trail at the overlook of the New Manchester mill ruins at the one mile mark. This trail was specifically designed to highlight the park's wildlife and plant communities. The trail winds through several lovely stream coves and follows the ridges overlooking Sweetwater Creek. It connects to the end of the Red Trail at the largest rapid and then continues down a lovely stretch of Sweetwater Creek. The trail then turns west and follows Jack's Branch upstream to Jack's Lake. After climbing out of the lake valley, the trail passes through the Jack's Hill area, a former farming community now known for its open meadows, which are a favorite of bird watchers.



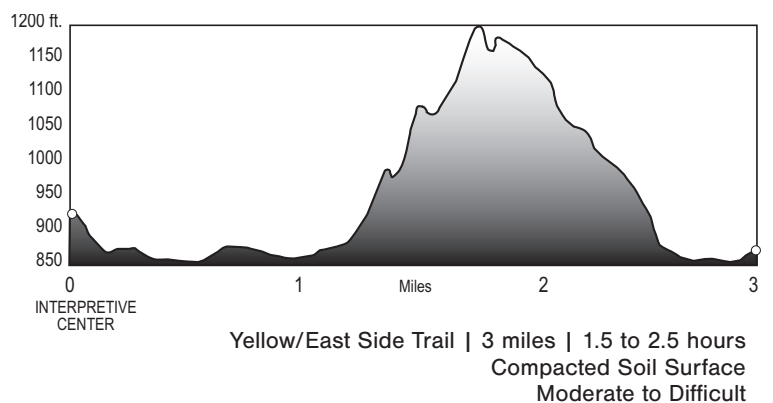
Orange Trail

The Orange Trail is a 2.3 mile, moderately difficult "lollipop" trail which begins on the east side of the Yellow Trail bridge which crosses Sweetwater Creek. It requires a .7 mile walk on the Yellow Trail from the Visitor's Center to reach the trail beginning. This trail requires several hundred feet in vertical elevation gain. It traverses through beautiful hardwood forests with many Chestnut Oaks and overlooks from high above the mile-long stretch of whitewater rapids (up to class IV+) of Sweetwater Creek.

Brown Trail & Green Trail

The Brown Connector Trail is 1.2 miles-long (elevation is not shown).

The Green Connector Trail is 0.72 miles-long (elevation is not shown).



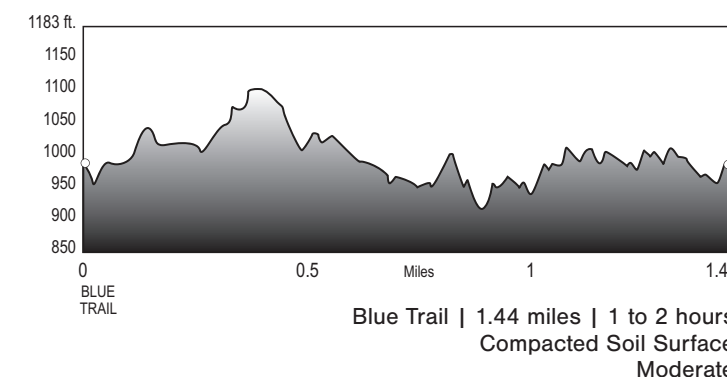
Yellow/East Side Trail

The Yellow Trail is accessed by starting on the Red Trail at the Interpretive Center then turning left where the Red Trail meets Sweetwater Creek. It then heads upstream to the bridge across Sweetwater Creek. After crossing the bridge, the trail turns downstream where, just past the wooden footbridge, you will find a fork in the trail. Those wishing for a more gradual ascent up to the ridge are advised to take the trail to the left (clockwise around the loop). This trail passes through some of the most beautiful hardwood forests in the park and has an elevation gain of approximately 350 feet. As the trail descends through the ravine on the south side of the loop, look for the large rock overhang on the left. Archaeologists estimate that Native Americans used this as shelter for several thousand years. To protect this area, do not climb on the slope or the rocks. When the trail leaves the ravine and levels out, you will be walking through many dense stands of Mountain Laurel (beautiful in the spring when they bloom). This is also the area where the bricks for the New Manchester mill were made in the late 1840s. The extraction pits are visible from the trail in the winter.



Safety Tips & Etiquette

- Tell someone your itinerary and expected return time.
- Take a map, water, snacks, first aid kit, flashlight, and whistle. Three short blasts on a whistle are known as a call for help.
- Do not stray from trails. If you become lost, stay in one location and wait for help. This will make it easier for rescuers to find you.
- Don't count on cell phones to work in all areas, but if they do, be able to give details about your location.
- When boating, personal flotation devices should be worn at all times.
- Be prepared for unexpected rain and wind which can lead to hypothermia. Always carry quality rain gear and turn back in bad weather. If you become wet or cold, it is important to get dry and warm as quickly as possible.
- Dress in layers and avoid cotton. Today's hikers can choose from numerous fabrics that wick moisture, dry quickly and conserve heat. Many experienced hikers wear a lightweight shirt that wicks moisture while carrying a fleece pullover and rain jacket.
- Pack out all trash.
- It is a law to have pets leashed at all times. Please clean up after them also.
- Do not pick flowers, disturb wildlife, or take anything from the park.
- Protect the park and help prevent erosion by staying on marked trails and not wandering off the trails or using shortcuts.



Blue Trail

This loop trail is a 1.44 mile loop trail which is rated moderate. It begins on the east side of Sweetwater Creek, heading north off of the Orange Trail just east of the Yellow Trail bridge which spans Sweetwater Creek. It passes through varied terrain and habitats in the northeastern part of the park. It is necessary to walk from the Visitor's Center approximately .7 of a mile on the Yellow Trail and then across the bridge to reach the Blue Trail beginning.