

Rivers Bring People

The first European settlers came to the New River in the mid-1600s. They found crystal clear waters, fertile land for farming and a forest filled with American Chestnut trees. The Chestnut trees provided sturdy lumber for building houses and barns, and a valuable food crop.



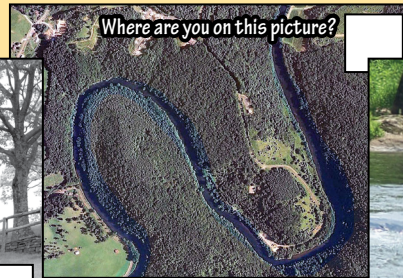
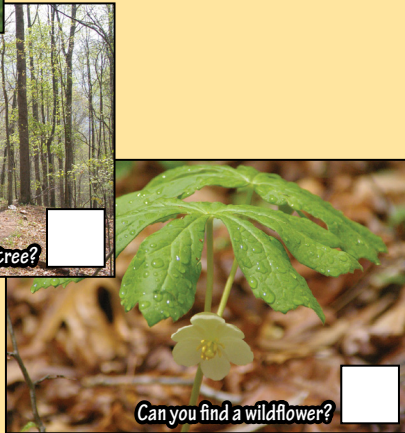
New Trees Move In

Before the introduction of Chestnut Blight, one in every four trees in this forest was an American Chestnut. Now oak, hickory, beech and poplars dominate the canopy. The understory is filled with dogwoods and rhododendrons, and the forest floor is thick with ferns and wildflowers such as mayapples.



People Change the Forest

In the early 1900s, the forest would change forever with the introduction of Chestnut Blight - a fungus that came to America on an Asian chestnut species. Within 40 years nearly all American Chestnut trees died off.



The Old and The New

From the European settlers that came centuries ago, to the Native Americans before them, the New River has tied people and wildlife to this region. During your hike today, think about the footsteps that have fallen before you, learn about the plants and animals that call the river home and...

GET CONNECTED

Insects Connect

The various wildflowers of the forest floor provide food for many insects. Mayapples, for example, are pollinated by bumblebees and other long-tongued bees that visit the forests and meadows of New River State Park.



Diverse Habitat

Today, State Park staff maintain the meadow for its significance as a diverse habitat. The shorter grasses are preferred nesting habitat for birds such as American Woodcock. The meadow also provides feeding areas for butterflies, songbirds and deer.



Sharing the Land

New River State Park was established in 1976. Under the management of North Carolina State Parks, the New River is protected for its ecological importance, educational value and the recreational enjoyment of all people.



Birth of a Mountain Meadow

The meadow that the Hickory Trail passes through was once a farm field. Settlers cleared areas of forest to grow crops such as corn and tobacco, and to create pasture land for horses and cattle. If left alone, the meadow will become a forest again over time.

Remember, Everything's Connected

In this brochure, only a few of the relationships found along the trail were discussed. Many more relationships are present. How many more relationships can you find? Here are some others you can search for:



I Lichen You!

Some fungi and algae "lichen" each other and help each other survive. In this relationship, the fungus protects the algae from adverse conditions and in exchange the algae provides the fungus with food. This is an example of mutual symbiosis (when two different organisms help each other

survive).

Indicators of Health

Frogs and salamanders have such an extremely close relationship with nature that they are considered indicator species. Because many species of frogs and salamanders "breathe" through their skin, their presence in a stream or river indicates that the water is clean and healthy.



People and Nature

We also have a relationship with nature. When you go to the market to buy an apple, remember that the apple was once a flower pollinated by insects. Your home, constructed of wood, rock, or brick, came from items harvested from nature. Take the time to slow down and experience your natural world. And remember, everything in nature is connected... even us!



TRACK and KIP
want You to become a
Trail **TRACKer**

Thank you for joining us on the trail today. We want you to join the Trail **TRACKer** Team. It's fun, healthy and free. Best of all, you can earn prizes by walking TRACK Trails and TRACKing them on our website. For more information about the Trail TRACKer Team, other TRACK Trail adventures near you, or for general information about the **Kids in Parks** program, please visit our website at:

www.kidsinparks.com

Your Opinion Matters!

We would like to hear about your adventure on the trail today. Your feedback will help us improve the TRACK Trail program and will help us build more and better TRACK Trail Adventures in the future. Please visit our website (www.kidsinparks.com) and give us your opinion about the quality of your experience.

Kids in Parks...

for the Health of our Kids and our Communities.

New River State Park's TRACK Trail Partners



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New River State Park Nature's Relationships: Everything's connected

*"When we try to pick out anything by itself,
we find it hitched to everything else in the universe."
-John Muir*



Although this brochure will not guide you to specific locations along the trail, it will tell you a story to help you discover some of the relationships found here. Use the pictures and text to locate as many of these relationships as you can. Keep your eyes open and have fun.