

Natchez Trace Parkway



Teacher's Information Guide

2012 Edition



Help your students experience their America!

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Contact Information

Natchez Trace Parkway
2680 Natchez Trace Parkway
Tupelo, MS 38804
662-680-4027 or 1-800-305-7417
662-680-4033 FAX

Ridgeland Information Cabin
601-898-9417
601-898-9506 FAX

Mount Locust Historic Site
601-445-4211
601-445-4876 FAX

Natchez Trace Parkway
www.nps.gov/natr

Please call at least three weeks prior to the event you would like to schedule. All programs are free!



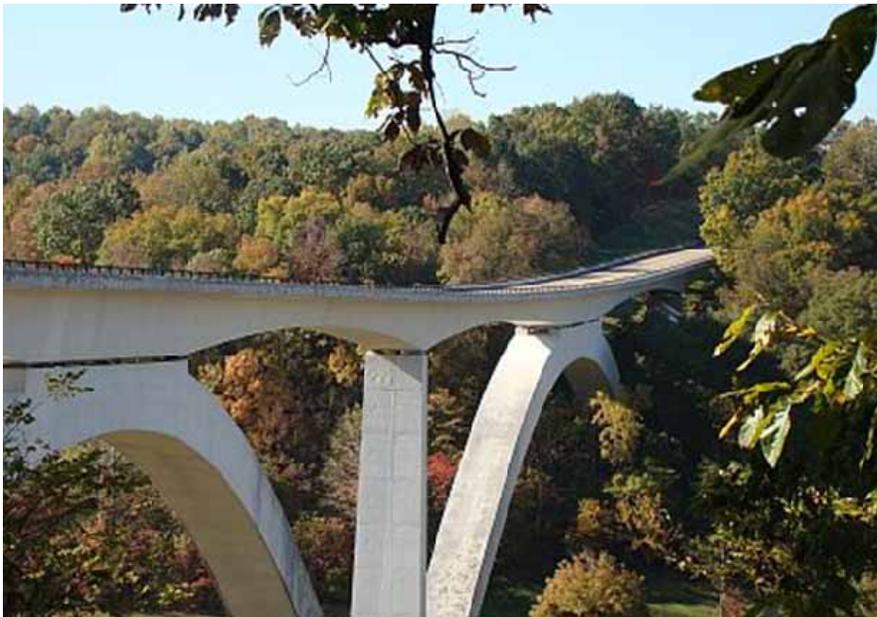
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Introduction

Connections

No matter what the time or place, human beings need a sense of self; a sense of how they got where they are, a sense that will help to shape their future. The Natchez Trace Parkway is both a historical record and a contemporary experience for travelers. Anyone who seeks an understanding of what the Natchez Trace Parkway represents will realize that it is a vignette of the history of our country.

An understanding of Natchez Trace will afford a more meaningful modern-day experience of this trail with ancient roots. Visitors and scholars who take the time to learn, will develop a sense of place and realize how they fit into the continuum of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Each one of us is on our own journey through time.



Bird Song Hollow Double Arch Bridge at milepost 438

The Beginnings

The Trace most likely began when meandering animals made trails as they followed each other through the forests of the areas we now call Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. Over time, these paths were traveled by American Indians, European explorers, pioneer traders, warring armies, postriders, and many others.

Although sometimes thought of as one trail, the Old Natchez Trace was actually a transportation corridor with a web of parallel and intersecting routes.

The Natchez Trace Parkway was established to commemorate the historical significance of the Old Natchez Trace. The Parkway runs from Natchez, Mississippi, to Nashville, Tennessee, cutting through the northwest corner of Alabama.

The Natchez Trace today

The modern Natchez Trace Parkway is a 444-mile, limited access, scenic drive. The headquarters is located about midway in Tupelo, Mississippi. The roadway is the connector between several sections of the Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail, a trail where hikers and horseback riders can experience scenery much like that seen by the travelers hundreds of years ago. The Parkway is a popular route for experienced bicyclists and also contains three campgrounds, several boat docks, and many picnic areas.

The Parkway is under the management of the National Park Service, an agency under the United States Department of the Interior. The mission of the National Park Service is to preserve and protect cultural and natural resources important to the identity of our country, while providing of the enjoyment of these public lands for current and future generations. There are almost 400 of these protected National Park units, which include places as diverse as Yellowstone National Park and the Statue of Liberty.

Introduction continued

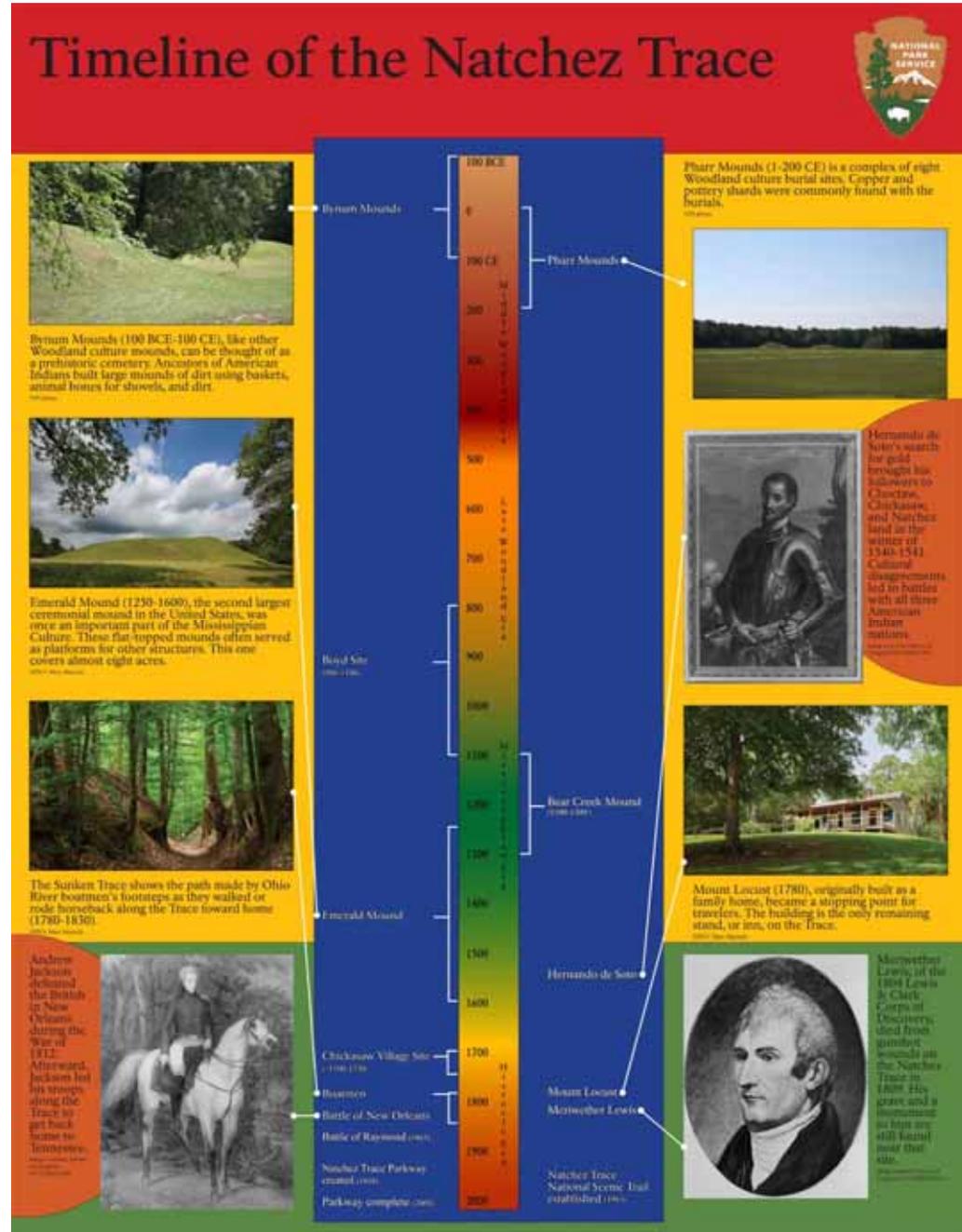
A blend of cultural and natural history

Many historic and natural areas are protected within the boundaries of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Old inns (stands), sections of the original trail, battlefields, and American Indian mounds are a few of the historical places along the Trace where people can explore their own sense of self in relation to historical elements.

Natural resources also abound along the Parkway. Swamps, prairies, forests, streams, and wildlife are protected within park boundaries. Interaction with the natural world reminds us of the bounty of our continent as well as the challenges of the first human inhabitants.

"Do you think we will see a REAL bear?"
 Second grader on a field trip at the Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center, Tupelo.

Two different full-size timeline posters and five trail posters are available for classrooms free of charge.



For Teachers

Materials and Opportunities: Free of charge

Materials

- Lesson Plans: K-12, multiple subject areas
 - Lesson Plan CD
 - Online: www.nps.gov/natr/forteachers/state-lesson-plans.htm
- Traveling Trunks
 - History
 - Science
 - Geography and GPS
- Posters: full size
 - 2 Timeline Posters
 - 5 Trail Posters
- Detailed maps and site bulletins
- Junior Ranger booklet: www.nps.gov/natr/forkids/beajuniorranger.htm

Ranger Services

- Ranger-led activities
 - Guest speakers
 - In-classroom lessons
 - Field trips
- Service learning project development
- Information assistance

Opportunities for Educators

- Special school events
- Service learning opportunities
- Teacher training and workshops
- Teacher-to-Ranger to-Teacher: (Summer employment)



Scan with cell phone to link to Teacher's page.

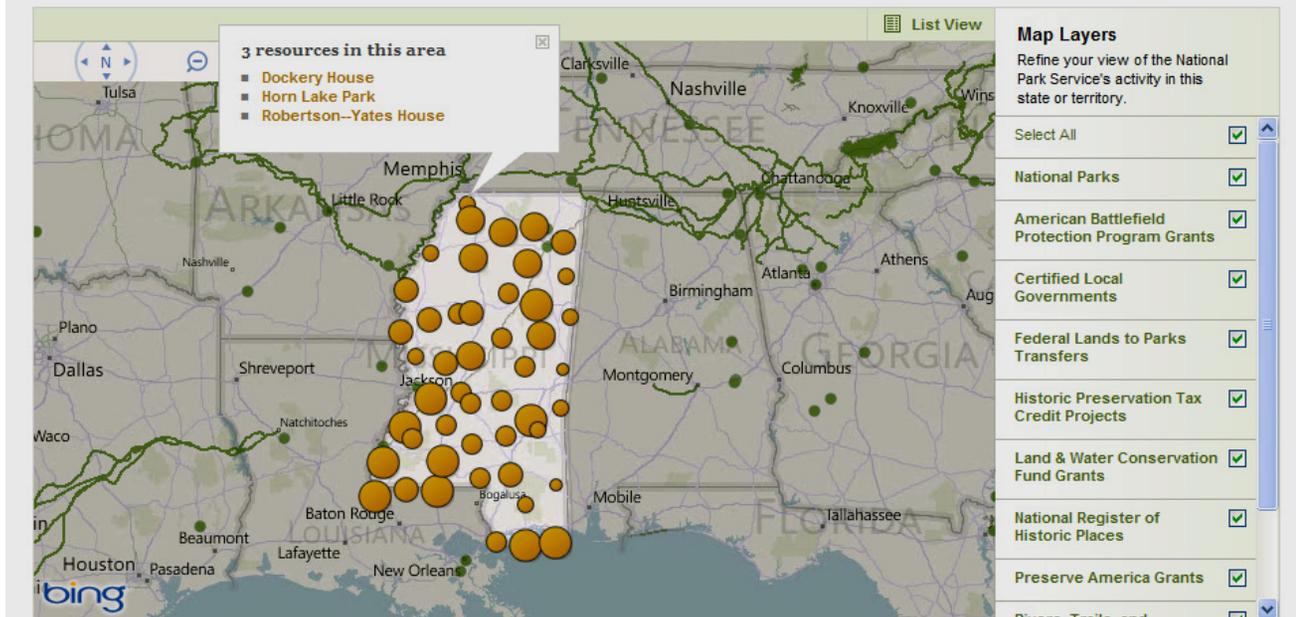
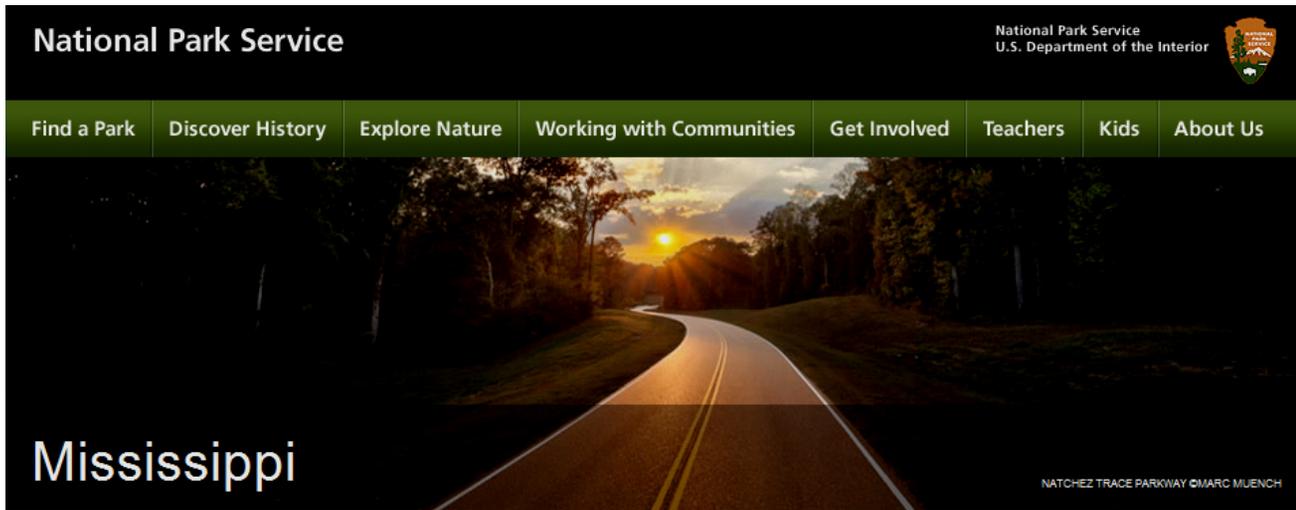
Other Online Resources

- Natchez Trace Parkway
 - www.nps.gov/natr
- Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail
 - www.nps.gov/natt
- Brices Cross Road National Battlefield Site
 - www.nps.gov/brcr
- Tupelo National Battlefield
 - www.nps.gov/tupe
- Trail of Tears National Historic Trail
 - www.nps.gov/trte
- State Pages for all 50 states (see next page)
- Event Calendar
 - Mississippi - www.nps.gov/findapark/event-search.htm?states_filter=MS
 - Natchez Trace Parkway events - www.nps.gov/natr/planyourvisit/events
- National Park Interpretation and Education resources across the country
 - www.nps.gov/learn/
- Teacher Ranger Teacher Information
 - www.nps.gov/learn/trt/

*"This was a life changing experience for my students."
Fourth grade teacher, Lee County, MS*

Sometimes funds are available to pay for bus transportation for field trips. Please call and inquire about funding.





State Pages :

Includes links to historic sites across the US, funded or administered by:

- National Parks
- Certified Local Governments
- Federal Lands to Parks
- Historic Preservation Tax Credit Projects
- Land & Water Conservation Fund
- National Register of Historic Places
- Preserve America
- Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance
- Save America's Treasures
- American Battlefield Protection Program

Mississippi:
www.nps.gov/state/ms/index.htm

Alabama:
www.nps.gov/state/al/index.htm

Tennessee:
www.nps.gov/state/tn/index.htm

Historical Background

Prehistoric Animals

Animals, especially large ones, prefer to follow paths through vegetation. It is not unreasonable to assume that some of these paths were also followed by early American Indians, and subsequently by the Indians' descendants, and finally by European settlers.

Some of the earlier mammals that lived in the area were very large, including a nine-foot-tall bison, (*Bison latifrons*), mastodons, giant sloths, and a smaller relative of the horse.¹

As American Indians settled in the area, the structure of the animal population changed. Excavations from two-thousand year old Indian mounds revealed the remains of animals still seen in this area today.²

There has been some change in the animal population. Two recent newcomers are the coyote and armadillo. Cougar and bison, whose remains were found in area mounds are no longer seen here in the wild. Red wolves also once roamed in the region of the Trace. Elk lived in the Carolinas and on bottomlands of west Tennessee,³ so they most likely also lived in the area of the Trace. An archeological village site in Arkansas contains remains of the extinct passenger pigeon which were evidently a favorite of elite American Indians in this region.

1 Cotter, John L. 1991. "Update on Natchez Man." *American Antiquity* 56, no. 1: 36-39. *JSTOR Arts & Sciences II*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

2 Jackson, H. Edwin, and Susan L. Scott. 2003. "Patterns of Elite Faunal Utilization at Moundville, Alabama." *American Antiquity* 68, no. 3: 552-572. *JSTOR Arts & Sciences II*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

3 Murrow, Jennifer L., Joseph D. Clark, and E. Kim Delozier. 2009. "Demographics of an Experimentally Released Population of Elk in Great Smoky Mountains National Park." *Journal Of Wildlife Management* 73, no. 8: 1261-1268. *Biological Abstracts*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).



Black Bear, Courtesy: US Fish and Wildlife Service

American Indians near the Old Trace

The earliest Indians who migrated to the southeast settled into a region with relatively mild weather, an abundance of game, and a long growing season. This combination of resources enabled these Indians to establish permanent communities and engage in farming, in addition to hunting and gathering.

We do not know the names of all of the original tribes who settled in the areas surrounding the modern Natchez Trace Parkway, but more recent, large tribes include the Chickasaw, the Choctaw, and the Natchez.

Mounds and villages along the Natchez Trace

Living in settlement communities provided the time to build large mounds with elaborate resting places for the deceased. Later Indian communities built mounds which had the primary purpose of being ceremonial, holding temples, or housing for the elite of the tribes.

Studies of mounds and village sites along the Natchez Trace and in the southeastern region of the United States, have helped to document the story of American Indians of this area.

We know the local Indian villagers traded with other distant Indian tribes. Travel occurred along some of the trails that eventually became known as the Natchez Trace. Artifacts found in the mounds along the Natchez Trace come from as far south as the Gulf of Mexico and as far north as the Great Lakes. Metal work was also found, including objects made by Indians, Europeans, and white settlers.

Cultivated Foods

Archeological study of mounds and village sites has provided insight into foods that were commonly used by the American Indians who settled near the Trace.

One trio that was commonly cultivated is known as the Three Sisters: maize (corn), beans, and squash. Other frequently cultivated plants were starchy grain seeds, such as little barley and maygrass. Little barley was widely cultivated.¹ Maygrass has seeds large enough to use either boiled or ground. Other plants that are were probably cultivated were sunflower, sumpweed, lambsquarters, and erect knotweed.



A statue of Piomingo in Fair Park in Tupelo, Mississippi. Piomingo was a signer of the Treaty of Hopewell that marked the first official relationship between the Chickasaw and the US Government.



Area Indians were farmers long before European explorers came to North America. They were famous for the Three Sisters, maize, beans, and squash, but they cultivated many other plants.



Nuts were used by southeastern Indians, including acorns, hickory, walnuts, and pecans. These were probably collected and not cultivated. Other known collected food species included grapes, persimmons, wild beans, wild plums, and sumac.²



Erect Knotweed



Maygrass



Chickasaw Plum



Persimmon

1 Smith, Christopher. 1996. "ANALYSIS OF PLANT REMAINS FROM MOUND S AT THE TOLTEC MOUNDS SITE." *Arkansas Archeologist* 35, 51-76. *America: History & Life*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

2 *ibid.*

American Indian Mounds



Emerald Mound

Located: Milepost 10.3, 10 miles north of Natchez

Time: Mississippian Period 1000–AD – 1700AD

Use: Ceremonial

Other:

- Second largest mound in the USA
- Eight acres
- Lower mound 35' tall
- Upper mound 25'
- Six smaller mounds once topped the large mound.

Mangum Mound

Located: Milepost 45.7, about 50 miles south of Jackson, MS.

Time: Woodland Period 300 BC—1000 AD

Use: Burial

Other:

- Actually a natural ridge, not a mound



Boyd Site

Located: Milepost 106.9, just north of Jackson, MS.

Time: Late Woodland & Mississippian Periods
800AD —1700 AD

Use: Burial and village site

Other:

- Six total mounds
- Two mounds are incorporated into one larger mound: total 110'x60'x4'



Bynum Mounds

Located: Milepost 232.4, about 30 miles south of Tupelo, MS

Time: Woodland Period 300 BC—1000 AD

Use: Burial and village site

Other:

- Village site existed around mound complex
- Six mounds
- Height 5' to 14'

American Indian Mounds



Pharr Mounds

Located: Milepost 286.7, about 20 miles north of Tupelo

Time: Woodland Period 300BC-1000AD

Use: Burial

Other:

- Eight mounds
- One of largest Woodland ceremonial sites in US
- Height 2' - 18'
- Site is over 85 acres

Bear Creek Mound

Located: Milepost 308.8, about 12 miles south of Cherokee, AL

Time: Mississippian Period 1000 AD -1700 AD

Use: Ceremonial

Other:

- Burials and village near mound
- 85' long
- Height 8'
- Burned daub found on mound (mud/reed plaster)



Pottery of the Woodland and Mississippian Periods

Pottery

Pottery, even broken pieces, can last for thousands of years. Pottery found on American Indian sites in the southeast gives clues to both the culture and the individuals who created the pots. Marks made on a pot are a sort of artistic language generated by one hand and represent both creativity and traditions of the culture.

Using pottery as containers was an improvement over using hide or bark. In general, older pottery is heavier and less decorative. Woodland Period pottery frequently was thick walled clay and was unmarked, or marked with fabric or cord. Pot shapes were utilitarian.

The Mississippian Period pots are evidence that pot makers learned new skills. Crushed shell was added to clay and this tempering allowed for stronger and lighter pieces. Mississippian pottery was more elaborate in both decoration and design. Many incised patterns were developed and often are typical of a particular region. Effigies, handles, painted designs, and more ornate forms became common.



Plain and thick pottery of Woodland Period design type



Incised, thin, shell tempered pottery of Mississippian Period design type

"Can you stay for the whole day?"
Fourth grader to a ranger presenting a classroom lesson.

www.nps.gov/history/seac/outline/04-woodland/index.htm.
Accessed Nov. 7, 2011.

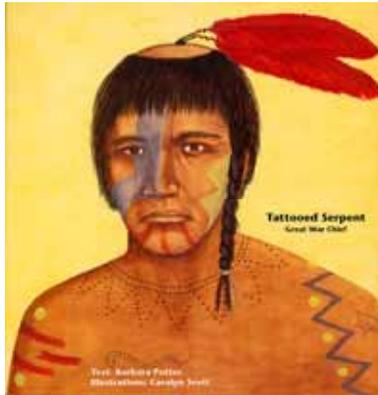
Some Notable Area Leaders



Pushmataha:
Choctaw



Tishomingo:
Chickasaw

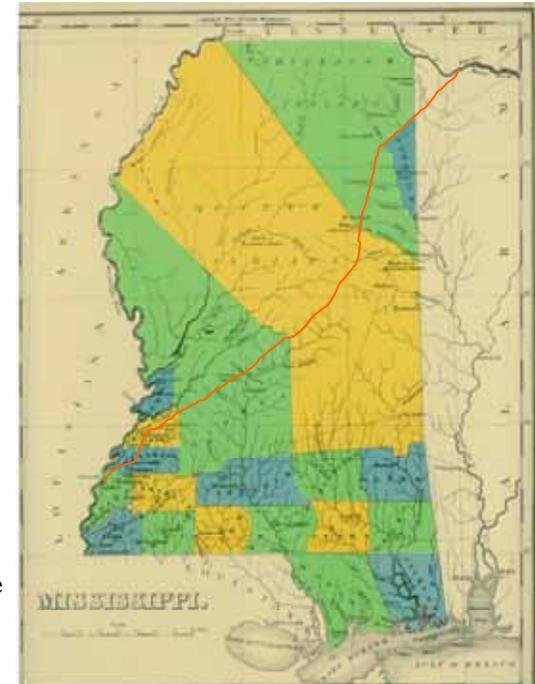


Tattooed Serpent:
Natchez

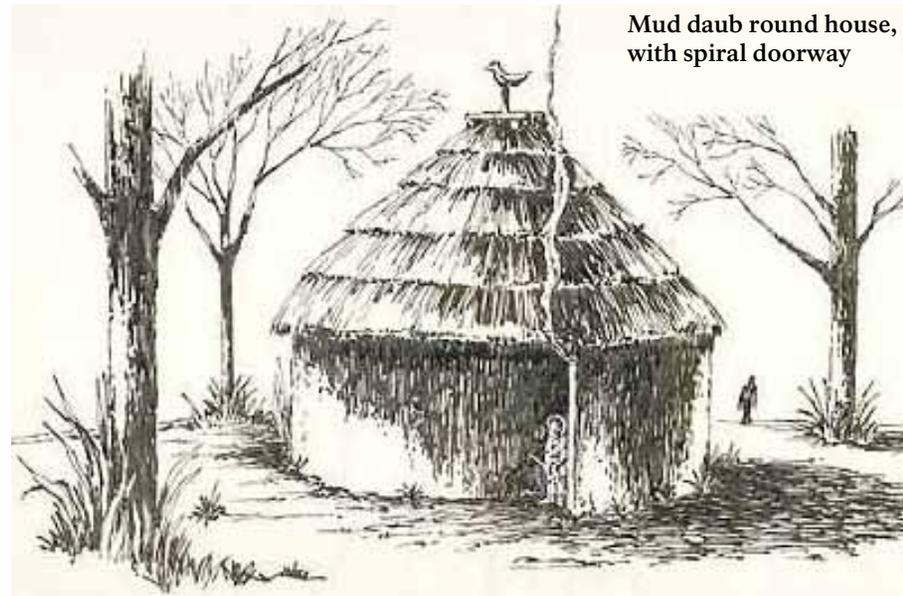
Shrinking of Mississippian Indian Nations

By 1822 the Choctaw and Chickasaw lands were being replaced by counties established by white settlers. The large yellow area shows the Choctaw holdings and the large green area in the northeast shows the Chickasaw land. The orange line shows part of the route of the Natchez Trace.

The Natchez Indians, who once occupied the southwest area of Mississippi, had integrated into other tribes, mostly the Choctaw.



Map: MS Historical Society



Mud daub round house,
with spiral doorway

Indian Communities

Southeastern Indian communities were complex and by the Middle Woodland Period, many settlements were established and agrarian. Strong political and religious structures were in place.

The homes that made up the communities were often one of two shapes, smaller round homes for winter and longer, airy rectangular homes for the summer. Homes were built of reeds covered with mud that were applied to poles sunk into the ground.

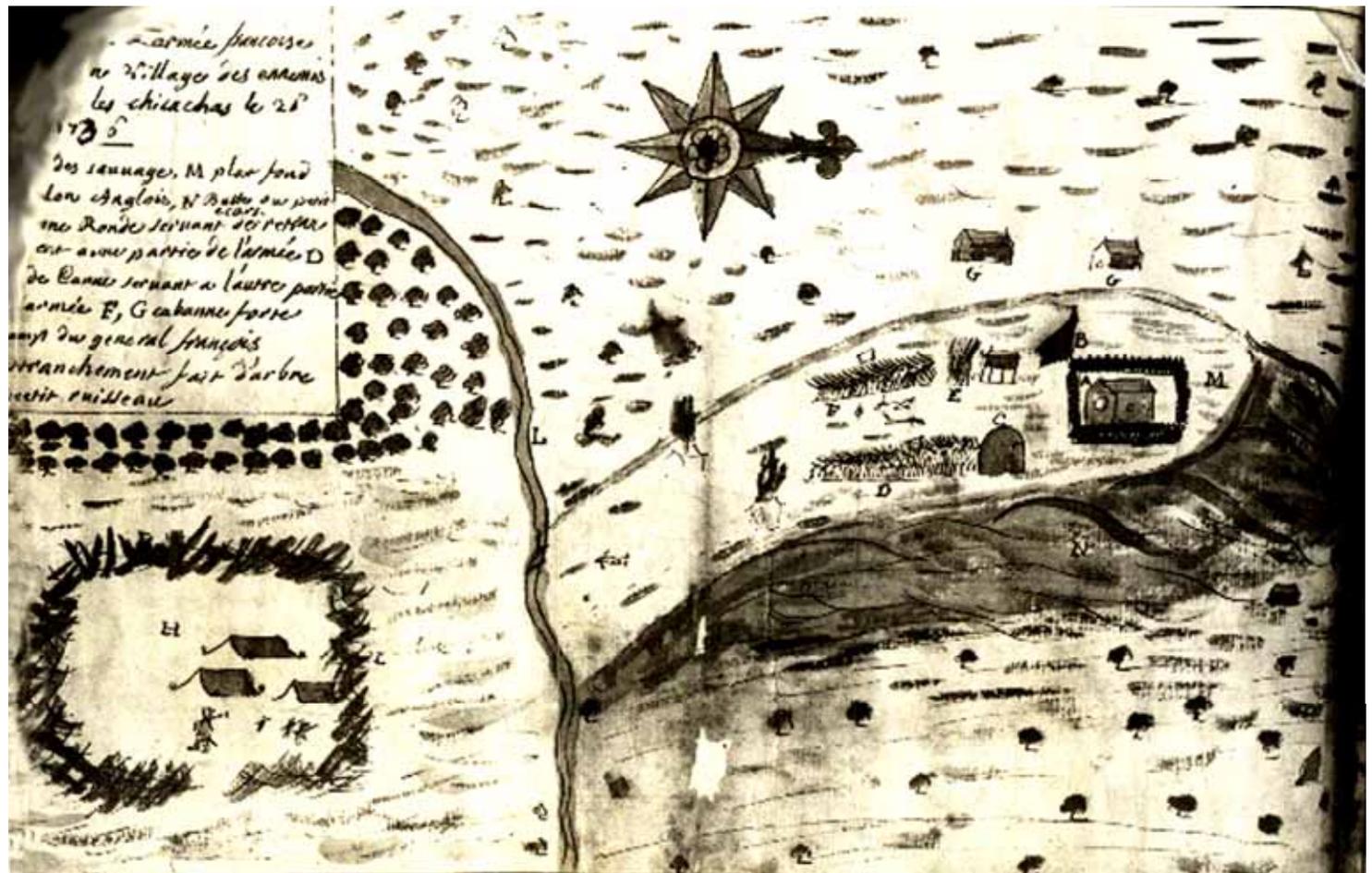
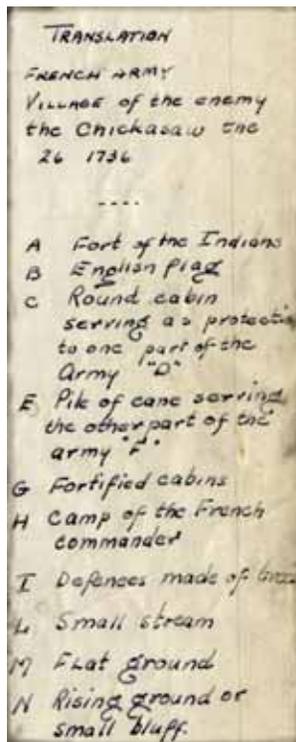
Battle of Ackia

As Europeans moved into the area, the local American Indians began to align themselves with the local immigrant settlements.

Eventually, the Chickasaw aligned with the British, and the Choctaw aligned with the French. This resulted in a territorial war that escalated and blew up in 1736, in what is known as the Battle of Ackia. The Chickasaw and British won against the Choctaw and French in this historic battle that took place in the area that is now Tupelo, Mississippi.

Many of the American Indians who lived in the areas surrounding the Natchez Trace adopted the farming methods, and some of the culture of the white settlers. Some owned highly productive plantations. However, their adaptation did not exclude them from experiencing discrimination.

Treaty of Hopewell with Choctaw—January 3, 1786
 Treaty of Hopewell with Chickasaw—January 10, 1786
 Partly designed to allow safe passage to traders through Chickasaw and Choctaw lands.



An early map for use by the French Army showing the layout of a Chickasaw village

Choctaw and Chickasaw Removal

Treaty of Fort Adams with Choctaw—December 17, 1801
Designed to provide for the establishment of a single wagon road along the network of northeasterly trails through Choctaw lands.

In 1830, the Treaty of Dancing Rabbit Creek was signed, ceding the last of Choctaw lands to the US Government, and initiating the removal of the Choctaw who were the first to be relocated from Mississippi to Indian Territory in present-day Oklahoma. Around 20,000 Choctaw lived in Mississippi at that time, all but five or six thousand were moved westward or died along the way on the Trail of Tears. They were moved in three waves in 1831, 1832, and 1833. They were convinced that their livestock would be replaced when they reached Oklahoma. This did not happen. Unfortunately, their removal began at the beginning of the cold season, on November 1, 1831.

Some Choctaw remained in Mississippi, some returned, and today are known as the Mississippi Band of Choctaw Indians. Although spread through 10 counties, their main office is Choctaw, Mississippi, near Philadelphia, approximately 25 miles east of the Parkway at Milepost 160.

Chickasaw leaders were very much opposed to being removed from their homeland. However, knowing that they had essentially no rights, they chose to move 4,000 of their people westward rather than face possible annihilation. Although their removal began with the 1832 Treaty of Pontotoc, it was not until July 4, 1837 that the first group of Chickasaw people ferried across the Mississippi River and began walking to Indian Territory. Well aware of the plight of the Choctaw and others who preceded them on the Trail of Tears, the Chickasaw people insisted on taking with them as many possessions and livestock as possible. Still, they suffered not only the loss of their homes and their homeland, but also the loss of many Chickasaw people.

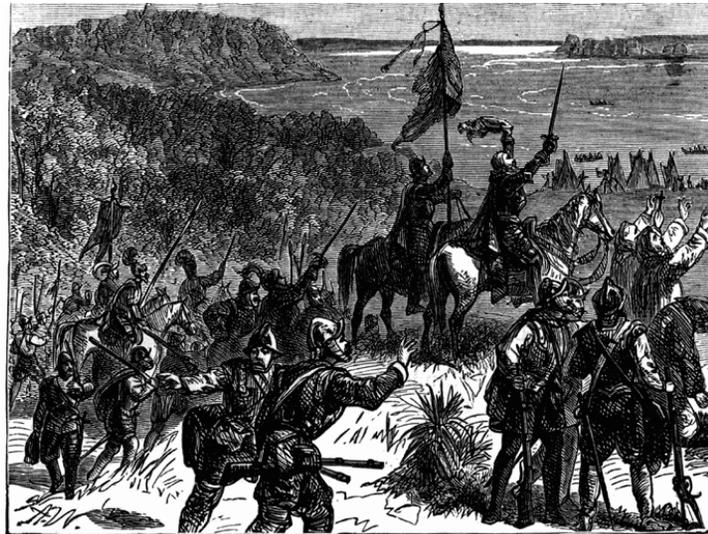
For more information about Choctaw and Chickasaw:
Oklahoma Tribes:
<http://www.choctawnation.com/>
<http://www.chickasaw.net/>
Mississippi Choctaw
<http://www.choctaw.org/>

Early Europeans

Hernando de Soto is thought to have traveled along the Indian trails that became the Natchez Trace. In the winter of 1540-1541, he and his men camped in Chickasaw lands near what is now Tupelo, Mississippi. By the end of the winter, he had disrespected the Chickasaw to the point that they insisted he leave.

In 1682, the French explorer, Rene-Robert, Cavalier de LaSalle made contact with the Natchez Indians. By 1716, the French had established a palisade fort known as Fort Rosalie, on a Mississippi River bluff. Built to serve for both defense and as a government center, the fort was also known as Fort Natchez. As the French moved into Natchez Indian lands, tensions turned into battles. By 1730, the remaining Natchez had moved elsewhere and the area was ripe for European-style development.

The British took over Natchez in 1763, as a result of the Treaty of Paris. The Spanish annexed Natchez in 1779, and Manuel Gayoso de Lemos, became governor. Gayoso is credited with instigating growth in the town. His surveyed streets are still contemporary streets of Natchez.¹



De Soto Discovering the Mississippi by Jerez de los Caballeros about 1542
Clipart courtesy FCIT

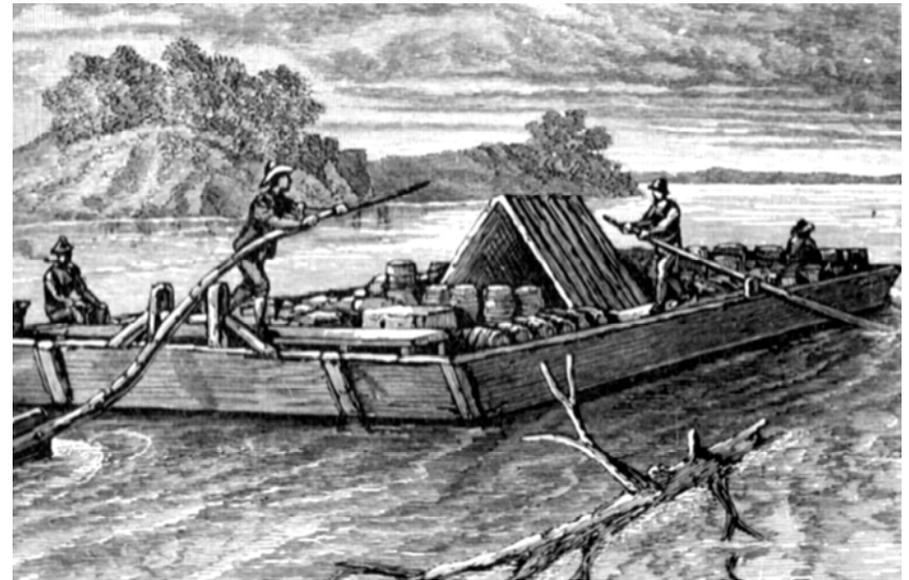
¹ Manuel Gayoso and Spanish Natchez by J. Elliot, Jr. <http://www/mshistory.k12.ms.us/articles/68/manuel-gayoso-and-spanish-natchez>. Accessed Nov 04, 2011.

Trail to Road

It Started in Natchez

With the growth of the town of Natchez, there was an increasing demand for supplies. The most cost efficient place from where to obtain supplies was the Ohio River Valley. Settlers in that area trapped, grew crops, and obtained refined goods from the east and then hauled them to Natchez to sell. No wagon roads lead to Natchez, so the traders built flatboats and made their way to Natchez, via the Mississippi River.

Unable to move their boats upriver against the current, the boatmen sold their boats as lumber. Pockets full of money or chits (which are similar to checks), the boatmen gathered in groups and headed back northeast to their homes via the network of trails now commemorated by the Natchez Trace Parkway.



Boatmen built flatboats that floated trade goods downriver using the strong current of the Mississippi as power.



Mount Locust is the last remaining stand in Mississippi. It is on the Natchez Trace Parkway at milepost 15.5.

From the time of the formation of the Mississippi Territory in 1798, to Mississippi's statehood in 1817, the numbers of boatmen traders using the trail increased. With this increase came additional settlements by Americans and Europeans along the trace network. Along with new settlers entering the area, came tensions and treaties with the local American Indians.

There were enough settlers in the area that on April 23, 1800, the Sixth Congress, Sess. 1, Ch. 31, voted to establish a new post road from Nashville to Natchez in the Mississippi territory.



Stands along the Natchez Trace

Europeans settling the area were known as “countrymen”. These Europeans established places of shelter (stands) for traveling traders. It was common for countrymen to marry Indian women and their children also frequently operated stands.

There were many stands along the Trace, but the history of most has been lost. Much of what we know about stands was written by clergy circuit riders who wrote about their experiences.

The accommodations at stands varied with the owners. Some were rough cabins without floors or fire places, and the food was meager. Others provided more comfortable settings.

Sleeping space sometimes consisted of a spot on a porch, or a deer hide on a dirt floor. However, especially in bad weather this was an improvement over sleeping in the forests.



Boatman Outfit

Boatmen were also known as Kaintucks, as they came from the area of Kentucky. Most of the information we have about the way they lived and traveled was from journals written by circuit riding ministers who shared stands with these travelers.

The best food usually consisted of bacon, biscuits, coffee and sugar, as well as some manifestation of a corn dish. Other meals may have included local game like deer and turkey. At least one stand advertised a “constant supply of whiskey”. In some areas, sweet potatoes and hominy were commonly served.

Farmers of both Indian and European descent, living near stands, often raised cattle, hogs, and crops, which they sold to stands to feed the travelers. ¹



Pineywoods cattle are a Mississippi variety of the Florida Cracker,

¹ Guice, John D. W. 2010. "Bedfellows and Bedbugs: Stands on the Natchez Trace." *Southern Quarterly* 48, no. 1: 7-26. *Literary Reference Center*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

Profiles of some Stand Operators

John McIntosh

John McIntosh was a countryman who established a stand near what is now milepost 250 on the Parkway. His was probably one of the first stands as it postdated his establishment of a plantation in the Mississippi frontier. As traffic on the Old Trace increased, he profited from offering his home to travelers¹.

His stand was the midpoint in the postal road established by the 6th Congress in 1800. His son, also named John McIntosh, ran the stand after his father. He founded the community of Tockshish, in the southern part of Chickasaw territory.

George Colbert

George Colbert or Tootemastubbe, was the son of John Logan Colbert and Minta Hoya, a Chickasaw. He operated a stand and ferry across the Tennessee River, near what is now milepost 327 on the Parkway. He was a counselor in the Chickasaw Nation. Colbert also owned farmland in both Alabama and Mississippi.

He moved westward during the Indian Removal, taking his family and 150 slaves². He died at Fort Towson, Oklahoma in 1839.



The site of Colbert's Ferry: milepost 327.3

1 Guice, John D. W. 2010. "Bedfellows and Bedbugs: Stands on the Natchez Trace." *Southern Quarterly* 48, no. 1: 7-26. *Literary Reference Center*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

2 Colber, George. <http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/C/CO017.html> . Accessed Dec. 20, 2011

John and Dolly Gordon

In 1812 Captain John Gordon and his wife Dolly Cross Gordon moved to his plantation and trading post on the Natchez Trace at the Duck River crossing. The Gordons operated a stand and a ferry across the Duck River for Natchez Trace travelers. According to the *Gordon Family Chronicle*¹, while Capt. Gordon was fighting in the Seminole War in Florida, on March 2, 1818, he sent instructions to Dolly to build a brick house. That house still stands on the Natchez Trace Parkway. For a short period of time, one of his business partners was William Colbert, also known as Cooshemataha, brother to George Colbert of Colbert's Ferry.

Capt. Gordon died at his home in 1819. Dolly remained at the home site and successfully ran the farm. She was known for being a kind and benevolent lady, as well as claiming to be a descendant of Pocahontas. She remained a successful business woman until her death in 1859².



Gordon House Historic Site: milepost 407.7

1 Bond, Octavia Zollicoffer. 1928. *Family Chronicle and Kinship Book*.
2 *ibid.*

Meriwether Lewis

In September of 1809, Meriwether Lewis, co-captain of the Lewis and Clark expedition of 1803-1806, began his journey to Washington D.C. to document and defend his spending of government funds, publish the expedition journals, and meet with former President Thomas Jefferson. While traveling, he wrote his will, leaving his possessions to his mother, Lucy Marks.



Meriwether Lewis at Grinder's Stand by Larry Janoff

At Fort Pickering, near modern day Memphis, Tennessee, Lewis and his traveling companions met with James Neelly, the Chickasaw agent who would escort them through Chickasaw territory. He then traveled through the remote wilderness along the Natchez Trace north to Grinder's Stand, an inn run by the Grinder family. Mrs. Grinder prepared a meal that evening, and made up a room for Lewis.

Later that evening gunshots were heard, and Lewis was found with two gunshot wounds: one to the head, and one to the chest. Lewis's life ended on the morning of October 11, 1809, at the age of 35.

Controversy still surrounds his death. Both William Clark and Thomas Jefferson, who probably knew Lewis best, accepted that Lewis had taken his own life. Existing historical evidence supports the probability of suicide. Murder theories have developed over time but still today, most historians believe Meriwether Lewis died by his own hand.

Andrew Jackson

The War of 1812 started with a hostile declaration in June 1812, between the United States and England. At that time, the West Florida boundary was in what is now along the Natchez Trace in the state of Mississippi. To prevent the British from occupying West Florida, President Madison and his advisors planned a military expedition to the southern frontier.

On January 13, 1813, Jackson and his two infantry regiments departed Nashville, headed for Natchez. They floated down the Mississippi River to meet Colonel John Coffee's US Cavalry Corps. Coffee traveled down the Trace to a town called Washington, just east of the Trace. Jackson and the infantry arrived in Natchez that same day.

The troops sat idle for a month and in March, that military operation was terminated. This angered Jackson who led his troops, many of whom were ill, back to Nashville.

In 1814, he and his troops again traveled south to New Orleans. In December, he was made commander. On January 1, 1815 he began a two week battle and defeated the British, which, as it turns out, was not necessary. Unknown to any of the military commanders, a peace Treaty had already been signed on Christmas Eve, 1814, in Ghent, Belgium.



However, when Jackson marched homeward over the Natchez Trace, it was as a general who had defeated the might of the British army at New Orleans. Jackson had finally rebounded from the abortive first Natchez expedition and emerged as a local and regional hero. On his triumphant journey up the Natchez Trace in 1815 he had the aura of a man destined to become a legend and ultimately, a President.

Decline of the Trace

The end of the war signaled the beginning of decline of the Natchez Trace's importance as a transportation corridor. By 1820 the route established by Jefferson skirted George Colbert's high priced ferry ride. The road was re-routed from Columbia, Tennessee, through Florence, Alabama, and then to Buzzard Roost, near Cherokee, Alabama.

By 1821, most travelers were following less and less of the original Trace route, and were bypassing the Chickasaw Nation. By 1824, only 85 miles of the Old Trace ran through Choctaw territory. The Trace as a continuous route was virtually non-existent after 1825.¹

Perhaps one of the most infamous uses of the Old Trace came as a direct result of a project of President Jackson. In 1830, under the guidance of President Andrew Jackson, Congress passed a law that authorized the voluntary emigration of Indians east of the Mississippi River to the west. In the act were provisions for land exchanges and compensations for improvements to property such as houses, barns and orchards. There was no authorization to seize Indian lands and the act confirmed that previously made treaties should not be violated.²



To support a growing white population in the Mississippi area, farmers plowed lands that once were sections of the Old Trace.

1 Guice, John D. W. 2010. "Bedfellows and Bedbugs: Stands on the Natchez Trace." *Southern Quarterly* 48, no. 1: 7-26. *Literary Reference Center*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

2 Cave, Alfred A. 2003. "ABUSE OF POWER: ANDREW JACKSON AND THE INDIAN REMOVAL ACT OF 1830." *Historian* 65, no. 6: 1330-1353. *Academic Search Premier*, EBSCOhost (accessed January 20, 2012).

However, this is not what happened. States were allowed to give preferential treatment to white settlers and Indian lands were awarded to those settlers. The Indians were threatened and lost their rights of self government, and so they were convinced to move westward. The Old Trace was used to move Choctaw northward to points along what is now known as the Trail of Tears. The Chickasaw temporarily encamped very near the Old Trace waiting for policies to fall into place and then they too were moved west.

New mode of travel

An alternate mode of travel was on the horizon. The *New Orleans* was the first steamboat to arrive in Natchez, Mississippi, in December 1811. After steamboat mechanics were improved, boatmen found it easier to travel home via steamboat. Motorized boats could haul more goods with less effort. The trip home was also much easier. By the 1840s, most people were traveling by steamboat.

Sections of the Old Natchez Trace near developing towns were incorporated into roadways. In the more rural areas, Trace sections were plowed under by farmers. The Old Trace traversing remote areas, simply became part of the landscape. The era of the walking boatmen was over.



The New Orleans by Gary Lucy

Civil War

Rocky Springs Area

Probably one of the most historic and traumatic experiences to occur in the Rocky Springs area was in May of 1863. For more than a week General Ulysses S. Grant made it his headquarters. His army of 40,000 troops camped around there, in an area of less than 25 square miles, setting up near the church, the spring, the girl's college, and in open fields. The passage of the Union army through Rocky Springs is a matter of important interest to military historians. Here, for the first time in the Civil War, Grant demonstrated that it was possible for a major army to cut itself off from its supply base and successfully fight a campaign while subsisting on the surrounding countryside.

Local tradition has it that the Union troops enthusiastically carried out the command of General Grant in "living off the land," reducing a prosperous community to poverty. Foraging was done under the direction of officers who were instructed to give receipts for their requisitions and to turn in an account to the quartermaster office of the property taken.



Church at Rocky Springs, milepost 54.8

Not surprisingly, there was considerable looting, but buildings and other real property seem to have suffered only to a minor degree. Memoirs left by residents of the region complain of the loss of food, clothing, farm stock, and slaves.

From there, Grant's army traveled via Old Trace to Raymond and Jackson and eventually to Vicksburg.



Tupelo National Battlefield

Northern Mississippi

In 1863, the Union plan for war in the west was to bisect the Confederacy east of the Mississippi River, using Major General William Tecumseh Sherman's army operating out of Chattanooga and Nashville, Tennessee. General Sherman's supply line, the one-track railroad from Nashville to Chattanooga, was vulnerable to attack from the forces of Confederate Major General Nathan Bedford Forrest who was operating in Northeast Mississippi. Sherman needed to keep Forrest at bay in north Mississippi. The success of General Sherman's entire campaign depended upon protecting this supply line.



Reenactment at Brices Cross Roads, a site near Baldwyn, Mississippi



Brices Cross Roads

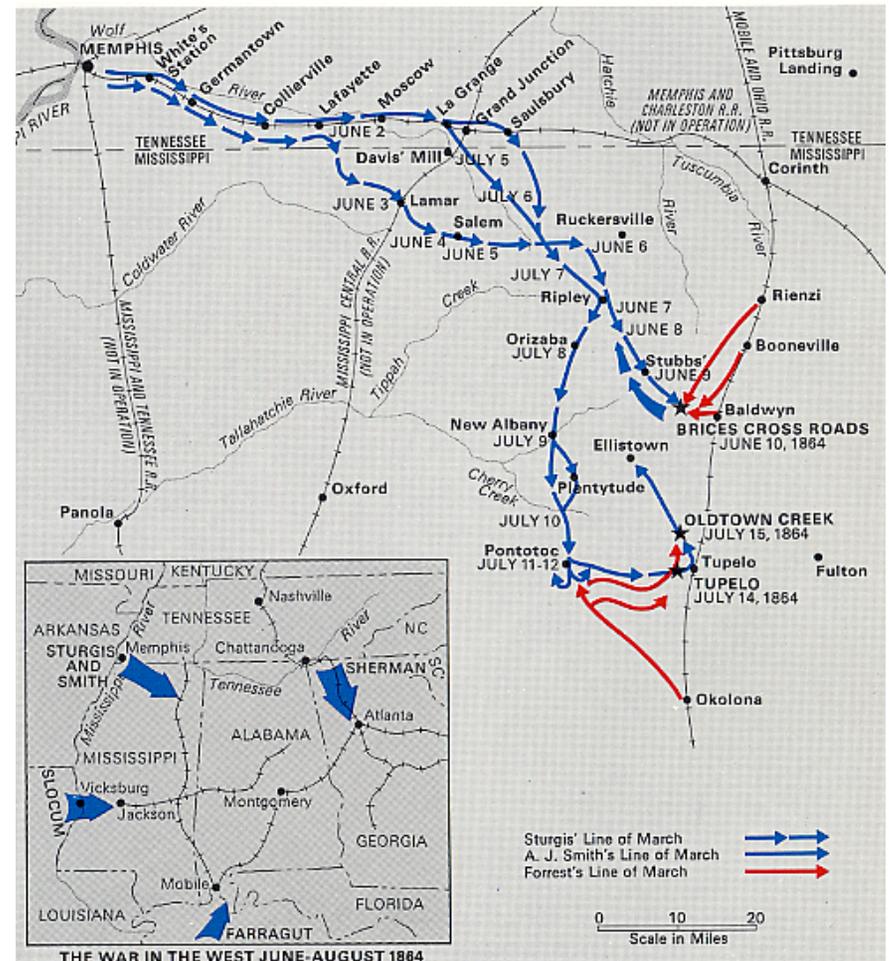
In order to keep Gen. Forrest from interfering with his plans, Sherman sent Brig. Gen Samuel Sturgis to threaten north Mississippi. Unaware that Sturgis was bait, Gen. Forrest responded and the Battle of Brices Cross Roads was fought on June 10, 1864. Unfortunately for the Union soldiers, the Confederate army outmaneuvered them and the Union army was forced to retreat.

Thanks to a series of defensive actions by a brigade of United States Colored Troops (USCT), most of Sturgis's army was able to escape almost certain capture.

USCT soldier

Tupelo (Harrisburg)

A month later, on July 14, 1864, Sherman's distractions continued when the Battle of Tupelo opened. Earlier that week, the unprepared Confederates had failed to keep the Federals from establishing a strong line on high ground. The armies rallied against each other for two days, finally concluding the battle at Old Town Creek. Neither army is credited with winning this battle, but again, Sherman had succeeded in keeping General Forrest occupied elsewhere.



The Revival of the Old Trace

Although, the Natchez Trace had ceased to be a continuous road long before the Civil War, interest in the old road was revived when a journalist published an article in the September, 1905 issue of *Everybody's Magazine*. John Swain was researching the centennial of Meriwether Lewis's death when he uncovered the history of the Natchez Trace.



Image courtesy of magazineart.org

In his article, Swain stated, "The Natchez Trace itself, even if it were not so picturesque and delightful in its whole length, has played so great a part in our country's history that by right, demands attention and a visit from us."

Voices began to echo this sentiment as chapters of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR), from the states of Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee, also recognized the historical importance of the old trade route.

In 1909, the DAR dedicated the first of many markers to indicate the route of the Old Natchez Trace.

In 1934, the Natchez Trace Association (NTA) was formed for the purpose of promoting the paving of the Natchez Trace route. Money was collected by the NTA to send representatives to Washington, DC. Roane Fleming Byrnes a NTA leader, was instrumental in encouraging the popularization of the project.



"...and who does the Natchez Trace Parkway belong to?"

Ranger to students at the end of a field trip.

"Us!"

Students happily respond in unison.

In a depressed economy, Mississippi Representative, Thomas "Jeff" Busby, saw the advantages of reworking the historic old road into a national icon, a work project, and a tourist attraction. He introduced the idea to congress. On May 21, 1934, President Roosevelt signed permission for a government survey, to investigate the development of a commemorative road.

Ground breaking was on September 16, 1937. On May 21, 1938, the Natchez Trace Parkway officially became a unit of the National Park Service. The roadway was officially completed on May 21, 2005.



The Natchez Trace Today

The Natchez Trace Parkway is a 444-mile drive through exceptional scenery and 10,000 years of North American history. Used by American Indians, “Kaintucks”, settlers, and future presidents, the Old Trace played an important role in American history.

Each year six-million visitors enjoy the Parkway through a variety of activities and special events. Camping, biking, and ranger led programs are among the most popular activities and it is also a popular place for hiking, horseback riding, and fishing. Special events occur throughout the year, featuring demonstrations and celebrating many aspects of American culture.

Teacher resources, training, and student activities are available to encourage the next generation to appreciate, and explore their relationship with one of America’s great National Parks.



Students on a field trip

"I loved visiting the mounds!"
Fourth grade student on a field trip.

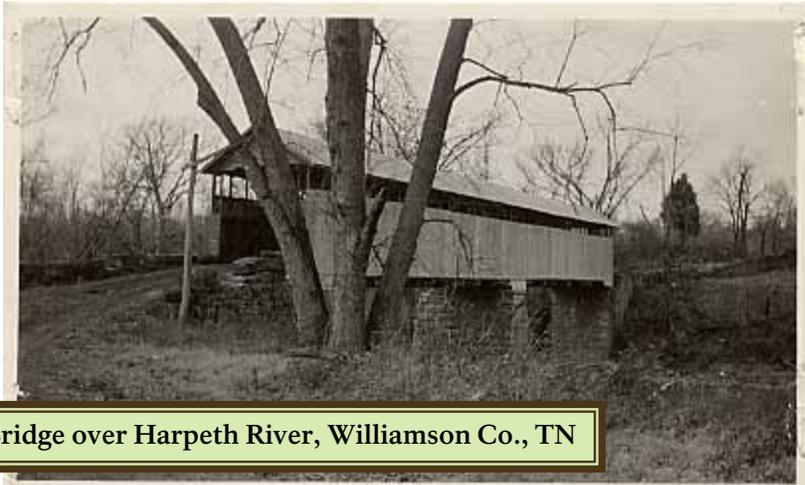


Teachers at a workshop learning about the natural resources

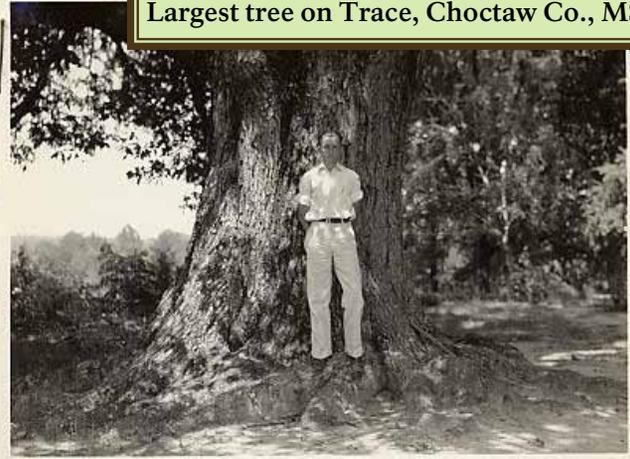


Students learning about the Natchez Trace at the Oka Kapassa Festival

Natchez Trace Parkway Album



Union Bridge over Harpeth River, Williamson Co., TN



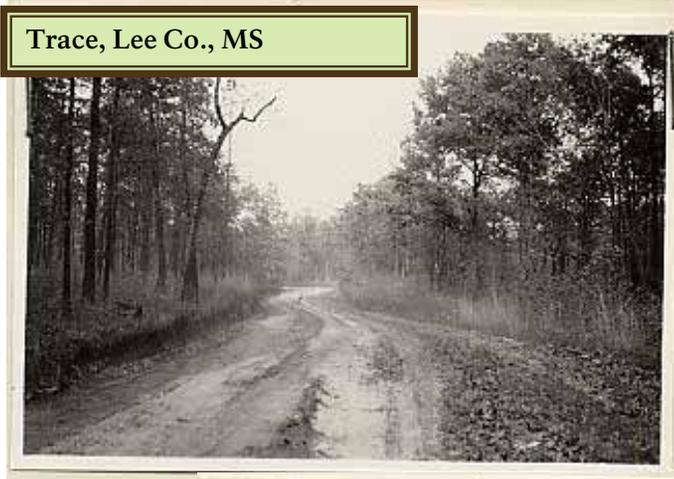
Largest tree on Trace, Choctaw Co., MS



1812 Marker at AL, TN Line



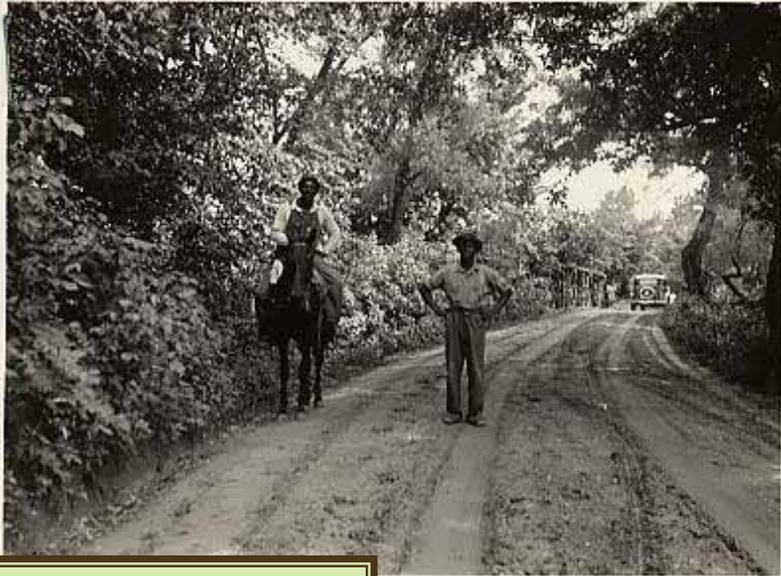
George Colbert House, Colbert Co., AL



Trace, Lee Co., MS



Tochshish Church, used as a black elementary 1934, Pontotoc Co., MS



Trace, Claiborne Co., MS



Trace, Prentice Co., MS



Trace ford, Wayne Co., TN



Trace road marker, Lauderdale Co., AL



Trace neighbors Leake Co.,



CULTURAL RESOURCES

Closely following the original Natchez Trace, the Parkway leads contemporary travelers beside one of the most historic routes in America. The visiting motorist encounters historic sites, military battlefields, American Indian burial mounds and preserved sections of the Old Trace. Interpretive information for each site is provided by large, wooden signs and markers placed by the National Park Service at points of interest along the Parkway.

Meriwether Lewis

Meriwether Lewis, with William Clark, led the first expedition to the Pacific Northwest (1804-06). Lewis died under mysterious circumstances at Grinders Inn, on October 11, 1809. The broken column design of this monument symbolizes a life ended in its prime. (MP 385.9)



Rocky Springs

Rocky Springs (ca. 1795) declined after the onslaught of yellow fever, drought and the Civil War. Now a ghost town, a small cemetery rests on a hill top under tall trees draped with Spanish Moss. (MP 54.8)



Gordon House

One of the few remaining buildings associated with the Old Trace, this brick house (ca. 1818) was the home of John Gordon. Gordon operated a ferry across the Duck River from 1801 until traffic on the Trace declined. (MP 407.7)



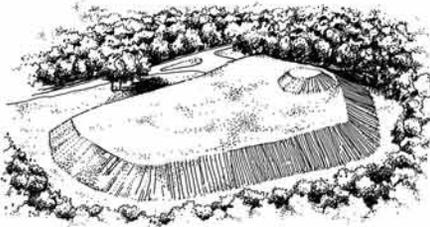
Mount Locust

Built in 1778 Mount Locust served as both inn or "stand," and family dwelling. This small plantation home is the only remaining stand of the more than 50 that served the Old Trace. (MP 155)

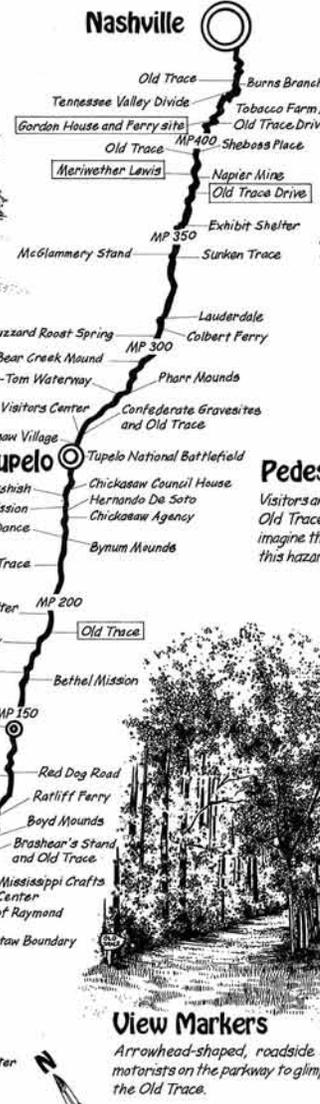


Emerald Mound

Ancestors of the Natchez Indians built this and other ceremonial mounds ca. 1400 A.D. The second largest of its type in the United States, it covers nearly eight acres. (MP 10.3)



Nashville



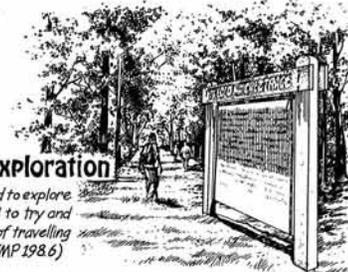
Old Trace Drive

A narrow, one-way route leads along a paved section of the Old Trace. Overlooks provide views over the surrounding countryside. (MP 375.8)



Pedestrian Exploration

Visitors are encouraged to explore Old Trace on foot and to try and imagine the hardships of travelling this hazardous route. (MP 198.6)



View Markers

Arrowhead-shaped, roadside markers allow motorists on the parkway to glimpse sections of the Old Trace.



Sunken Trace

The constant traffic of generations of travelers along the Trace, carved a deep sunken path in the ground. The trail was further eroded after heavy storms filled the route with water. (MP 41.5)



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NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY RECORDING PROJECT
UNIVERSITY OF MISSISSIPPI

NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
PARK HEADQUARTERS 2680 NATCHEZ TRACE PARKWAY
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MISSISSIPPI

SHEET 3 of 15

HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD
MS-115

IF REPRODUCED, PLEASE CREDIT: HISTORIC AMERICAN ENGINEERING RECORD, NATIONAL PARK SERVICE, NAME OF DELINEATOR, DATE OF THE DRAWING



NATURAL RESOURCES

"As settlers advanced across the South, they cut holes in the forest as patches and plantations. They cut tunnels through the vast woods to form trails and roads: they scarcely had force enough to sweep the forest itself away."
 -Clark and Kirwan (1967)

The Swamp Succession

1a. Tupelo-Baldcypress Swamp Community

- located in areas with water tables between ground level and 3 feet above ground level
- poor 10s for these trees are the buttress trunk bases on both and so-called root "knees" on the bald cypress
- named for the dominant species

1b. Swamp Community

- located in areas with water tables at or slightly below ground level
- dominant species is Hazel Alder and associated shrubs including Buttonwood and Winterberry



Cypress Swamp (M.P. 122.0)

The Old Field Succession

1. Annual Grass - Weed Community

- first cover for abandoned fields
- 1 to 2 year lifespan

2. Perennial Grass - Weed Community

- 3rd year replacement
- 5 to 8 year lifespan

3. Shrub Community

- often does not occur further south
- may last 10 to 20 years



Additional Communities

Black Belt Prairie and the

- a. Discontinuous prairie
- in uplands found early conversion to pasture, and farmland
- new characteristic identifier of the region is the Eastern Redstart/hammock which has ties to soil in abandoned fields

- b. Upland forest
- most abundant species are Post Oak, Blackjack Oak, and Hickories

- c. Lowland forest
- a varied bottomland forest with thick briar, shrub or cane undergrowth

4. Pine Community (Fire Subclimax Community)

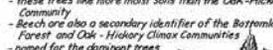
- 75 to 100 year succession lifespan if not interrupted
- with clearing fires, this community could last forever without a hardwood succession
- Predominately Shortleaf and Loblolly Pines



U. Choctaw Boundary (M.P. 128.4)

Beech - Maple Community

- this is the climax community for more northern states such as Ohio, Indiana, and Southern Michigan
- consider this to be an "island" community within the normal forest
- these trees like more moist soils than the Oak-Hickory Forest and Oak-Hickory Climax Communities
- named for the dominant trees

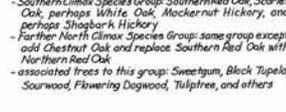


5. Oak - Pine Community (Transition Stage)

- usually lasts 100 years
- most commonly seen in southern half of the Parkway
- Oaks, Pines, Hickory, Sweet gum, Winged Elm, American Elm, Tuliptree, Beech, and others

6. Oak - Hickory Climax Community

- the ultimate tree community for much of the entire region
- no fully mature example forests exist on the Parkway
- Southern Climax Species Group: Southern Red Oak, Scarlet Oak, perhaps White Oak, Mockernut Hickory, and perhaps Shagbark Hickory
- Further North Climax Species Group: some group except old Chestnut Oak and replace Southern Red Oak with Northern Red Oak
- associated trees to this group: Sweetgum, Black Tupelo, Sourwood, Flowering Dogwood, Tuliptree, and others



Old Trace (M.P. 403.7)

2. Bottomland Forest Community

- this community may follow either of the other swamp communities
- a varied community with lots of spring forest wildflowers and early summer blooms
- Water Oak, Swamp Chestnut Oak, Overcup Oak, Sycamore, American Elm, Winged Elm, Sluggery Elm, Red Maple, and Black Walnut

- most abundant species are Post Oak, Blackjack Oak, and Hickories

- a varied bottomland forest with thick briar, shrub or cane undergrowth

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Animals of the Natchez Trace Parkway

Mammals

Order Didelphimorphia (Common Opossums)

Opossum

Didelphis virginiana

Order Cingulata (Armadillos)

Nine-banded armadillo

Dasypus novemcinctus

Order Rodentia (Rodents)

Beaver

Castor canadensis

House mouse

Mus musculus

Hispid cotton rat

Sigmodon hispidus

Muskrat

Ondatra zibethicus

Woodchuck

Marmota monax

Eastern gray squirrel

Sciurus carolinensis

Fox squirrel

Sciurus niger

Nutria

Myocastor coypus

Order Lagomorpha (Rabbits)

Eastern cottontail

Sylvilagus floridanus

Order Soricomorpha (Shrews & Moles)

Eastern mole

Scalopus aquaticus

Order Chiroptera (Bats)

Gray bat (Endangered)

Myotis grisescens

Little brown bat

Myotis lucifugus

Southeastern myotis

Myotis austroriparius

Eastern pipistrelle

Pipistrellus subflavus

Big brown bat

Eptesicus fuscus

Eastern Red bat

Lasiurus borealis

Hoary bat

Lasiurus cinereus

Evening bat

Nycticeius humeralis

Rafinesque's big-eared bat

Plecotus rafinesquii

Order Carnivora (Carnivores)

Bobcat

Lynx rufus

Coyote

Canis latrans

Red fox

Vulpes vulpes

Gray fox

Urocyon cinereoargenteus

Louisiana Black bear (Threatened)

Ursus americanus luteolus

Raccoon

Procyon lotor

Mink

Mustela vison

Striped skunk

Mephitis mephitis

Eastern spotted skunk

Spilogale putorius

River otter

Lutra Canadensis

Order Artiodactyla (Even-toed Ungulates)

White-tailed deer

Odocoileus virginianus

Feral pig

Sus scrofa



Gray bat (endangered)



Red wolf (extirpated)



Red fox pup



Eastern cottontail rabbit



White-tail deer fawn



Raccoon



Louisiana black bear

All photos on this page courtesy of US Fish and Wildlife Service

Birds

Order Pelecaniformes (Pelicans and Allies)

American White Pelican
Double-crested Cormorant

Order Ciconiiformes (Herons and Allies)

Green Heron
Yellow-crowned Night Heron
Little Blue Heron
Cattle Egret [X]
Snowy Egret
Great Egret
Great Blue Heron
Turkey Vulture
Black Vulture

Order Anseriformes (Waterfowl)

Canada Goose
Fulvous Whistling Duck
Wood Duck
Mallard

Order Falconiformes (Vultures, Hawks, and Falcons)

Mississippi Kite
Sharp-shinned Hawk
Cooper's Hawk
Broad-winged Hawk
Red-shouldered Hawk
Red-tailed Hawk
American Kestrel
Bald Eagle

Order Galliformes (Turkey, Pheasants, and Quail)

Wild Turkey
Ring-necked Pheasant [X]
Northern Bobwhite

Order Charadriiformes (Shorebirds, Gulls and Alcids)

American Woodcock
Killdeer
Herring Gull
Royal Tern

Order Columbiformes (Pigeons and Doves)

Mourning Dove
Rock Pigeon

Order Cuculiformes (Cuckoos and Allies)

Yellow-billed Cuckoo
Black-billed Cuckoo

Order Strigiformes (Owls)

Great Horned Owl
Barred Owl
Eastern Screech Owl

Order Caprimulgiformes (Goatsuckers and Allies)

Common Nighthawk
Chuck-wills-widow
Whip-poor-will

Order Apodiformes (Swifts and Hummingbirds)

Chimney Swift
Ruby-throated Hummingbird

Order Coraciiformes (Kingfishers)

Belted Kingfisher

Order Piciformes (Woodpeckers)

Red-headed Woodpecker
Red-bellied Woodpecker
Northern Flicker
Yellow-shafted morph
Yellow-bellied Sapsucker
Downy Woodpecker
Hairy Woodpecker
Pileated Woodpecker

Order Passeriformes (Perching Birds)

Eastern Wood Pewee
Acadian Flycatcher
Eastern Phoebe
Great-crested Flycatcher
Eastern Kingbird
Loggerhead Shrike
White-eyed Vireo
Red-eyed Vireo
Yellow-throated Vireo
Warbling Vireo
Blue Jay
American Crow
Fish Crow

Order Passeriformes (continued)

Purple Martin
Cliff Swallow
Northern Rough-winged Swallow
Barn Swallow
Tufted Titmouse
Carolina Chickadee
Brown Creeper
White-breasted Nuthatch
Red-breasted Nuthatch
Brown-headed Nuthatch
House Wren
Winter Wren
Carolina Wren
Bewick's Wren *
Golden-crowned Kinglet
Ruby-crowned Kinglet
Blue-gray Gnatcatcher
Eastern Bluebird
Wood Thrush
Hermit Thrush
American Robin
Gray Catbird
Northern Mockingbird
Brown Thrasher
European Starling [X]
Cedar Waxwing
Prothonotary Warbler
Blue-winged Warbler
Northern Parula
Yellow-rumped Warbler
Black and White Warbler
Cerulean Warbler
Yellow-throated Warbler
Prairie Warbler
Pine Warbler
Yellow Warbler
Kentucky Warbler
Hooded Warbler
Worm-eating Warbler
Swainson's Warbler
Louisiana Waterthrush
Common Yellowthroat
Yellow-breasted Chat
American Redstart
Summer Tanager

Order Passeriformes (continued)

Scarlet Tanager
Eastern Towhee
Bachman's Sparrow
Field Sparrow
Chipping Sparrow
Grasshopper Sparrow
Savannah Sparrow
Song Sparrow
White-throated Sparrow
White-crowned Sparrow
Dark-eyed Junco
Northern Cardinal
Dickcissel
Blue Grosbeak
Indigo Bunting
Painted Bunting
Bobolink
Eastern Meadowlark
Red-winged Blackbird
Common Grackle
Rusty Blackbird
Brown-headed Cowbird
Orchard Oriole
Baltimore Oriole
House Finch
Pine Siskin
American Goldfinch
House Sparrow [X]

[X] = non-native



Eastern Bluebird

Reptiles and Amphibians

Reptiles

Order Crocodylia (Crocodylians)

American alligator

Order Testudines (Turtles)

Common Snapping Turtle

Alligator Snapping Turtle

Three-toed Box Turtle

Eastern Box Turtle

Smooth Soft-shell Turtle

Eastern Mud Turtle

Chicken Turtle

Mississippi Map Turtle

Stinkpot

Razor-backed Musk Turtle

Ringed Sawback Map Turtle (Threatened)

Southern Painted Turtle

Slider

Red-eared Slider

Yellow-bellied Slider

Order Squamata (Lizards and Snakes)

Green Anole

Ground Skink

Five-lined Skink

Broad-headed Skink

Southeastern Five-lined Skink

Eastern Fence Lizard

Non-venomous Snakes

Midland Water Snake

Diamondbacked Water Snake

Northern Water Snake

Yellow-bellied Water Snake

Eastern Garter Snake

Eastern Ribbon Snake

Smooth Earth Snake

Eastern Hognose Snake

Rough Green Snake

Mud Snake

Rainbow Snake

Northern Black Racer

Southern Black Racer

Alligator mississippiensis

Chelydra serpentina

Macrolemys temmincki

Terrapene carolina triunguis

Terrapene carolina Carolina

Trionyx muticus

Kinosternon subrubrum

Deirochelys reticularia

Graptemys kohni

Sternotherus odoratus

Sternotherus carinatus

Graptemys oculifera

Chrysemys picta dorsalis

Pseudemys concinna

Chrysemys scripta elegans

Chrysemys scripta scripta

Anolis carolinensis

Scincella lateralis

Eumeces fasciatus

Eumeces laticeps

Eumeces inexpectatus

Sceloporus undulates

Natrix sipedon pleuralis

Nerodia rhombifera

Natrix sipedon sipedon

Natrix erythrogaster flavigaster

Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis

Thamnophis sauritus

Virginia valeriae

Heterodon platyrhinos

Opheodrys aestivus

Farancia abacura

Farancia erythrogramma

Coluber constrictor constrictor

Coluber constrictor priapus



American alligator



Western cottonmouth



Gray rat snake with full stomach

Non-venomous Snakes (*continued*)

Corn Snake
Gray Rat Snake
Black Rat Snake
Black Kingsnake
Speckled Kingsnake
Eastern Milk Snake
Mole Kingsnake
Eastern Worm Snake
Ringneck Snake

Venomous Snakes

Southern Copperhead
Western Cottonmouth
Canebrake Rattlesnake

Elaphe guttata guttata
Elaphe obsoleta spiloides
Elaphe obsoleta obsoleta
Lampropeltis getulus niger
Lampropeltis getulus holbrooki
Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum
Lampropeltis calligaster rhombomaculata
Carphaphis amoenus
Diadophis punctatus

Agkistrodon contortrix contortrix
Agkistrodon piscivorus leucostoma
Crotalus horridus atricaudatus

Amphibians

Order Anura (Frogs and Toads)

Southern Cricket Frog
Northern Cricket Frog
Green Frog
Bronze Frog
Bullfrog
Southern Leopard Frog
Bird-voiced Tree Frog
Gray Tree Frog Complex
Green Tree Frog
Squirrel Tree Frog
Spring Peeper
Upland Chorus Frog
American Toad
Fowler's Toad
Eastern Narrow-mouthed Toad

Order Caudata (Newts and Salamanders)

Red-spotted Newt
Mole Salamander
Spotted Salamander
Slimy Salamander
Northern Red Salamander
Three-toed Amphiuma
Western Lesser Siren
Webster's Salamander

Acris gryllus
Acris crepitans
Rana clamitans melanota
Rana clamitans clamitans
Rana catesbeiana
Rana utricularia
Hyla avivoca
Hyla versicolor and Hyla chrysoscelis
Hyla cinerea
Hyla squirella
Hyla crucifer
Pseudacris triseriata feriarum
Bufo americanus
Bufo woodhousei fowler
Gastrophryne carolinensis

Notophthalmus viridescens
Ambystoma talpoideum
Ambystoma maculatum
Plethodon glutinosus
Pseudotriton ruber ruber
Amphiuma tridactylum
Siren intermedia nettingi
Plethodon websteri



Chicken turtle



Bullfrog



Spotted Salamander
photo by Evan Grant, USGS

Plants of the Natchez Trace Parkway

Records of rare, threatened, or endangered Parkway taxa

There are thousands of species of plants along the length of the Parkway. Some are ancient and some are recent and unwelcome introductions.

A few plants are endemic and have only been found along the regions along the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Endemics



Tennessee purple coneflower
(*Echinacea tennesseensis* (Beadle))

Photo by J.S. Peterson@USDA-NRCS
PLANTS Database



Lyreleaf bladderpod
(*Paysonia lyrata* was *Lesquerella lyrata*)

Photo courtesy of Kevin England,
University of Western Alabama



Alabama larkspur
(*Delphinium alabamicum*)

Photo courtesy of Brian Keenan,
University of Western Alabama

Taxon	State	Common Name
<i>Amelanchier arborea</i>	Alabama	common serviceberry
<i>Arabis georgiana</i>	Alabama	Georgia rockcress
<i>Arenaria fontinalis</i>	Tennessee	American water starwort
<i>Asarum canadense</i>	Mississippi	Canadian wildginger
<i>Aster ericoides</i>	Mississippi	white heath aster
<i>Cacalia suaveolens</i>	Tennessee	false Indian plantain
<i>Carex virescens</i>	Mississippi	ribbed sedge
<i>Coreopsis auriculata</i>	Mississippi	lobed tickseed
<i>Dennstaedtia punctilobula</i>	Alabama	eastern hayscented fern
<i>Drosera brevifolia</i>	Tennessee	dwarf sundew
<i>Enemion biternatum</i>	Alabama	eastern false rue anemone
<i>Gentiana saponaria</i>	Alabama	harvestbells
<i>Hydrastis canadensis</i>	Tennessee	goldenseal
<i>Juglans cinerea</i>	Mississippi	butternut
<i>Juncus brachycephalus</i>	Tennessee	smallhead rush
<i>Lilium michiganense</i>	Tennessee	Michigan lily
<i>Lonicera flava</i>	Tennessee	yellow honeysuckle
<i>Marshallia trinervia</i>	Tennessee	broadleaf Barbara's buttons
<i>Menispermum canadense</i>	Mississippi	common moonseed
<i>Mikania cordifolia</i>	Mississippi	Florida Keys hempvine
<i>Osmorhiza longistylis</i>	Mississippi	longstyle sweetroot
<i>Pachysandra procumbens</i>	Alabama	Allegheny-spurge
<i>Panax quinquefolius</i>	Mississippi	American ginseng
<i>Parnassia grandifolia</i>	Tennessee	largeleaf grass of Parnassus
<i>Spiranthes lucida</i>	Tennessee	shining lady's tresses
<i>Spiranthes ovalis</i>	Tennessee	October ladies' tresses
<i>Swertia caroliniensis</i>	Mississippi	American columbo
<i>Trichomanes boschianum</i>	Mississippi	Appalachian bristle fern
<i>Trillium sessile</i>	Alabama	toadshade
<i>Uvularia grandiflora</i>	Alabama	largeflower bellwort
<i>Xyris tennesseensis</i>	Tennessee	Tennessee yelloweyed grass

All information this page from: Hatch, S. Kruse, D. 2004. The Vascular Flora of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Unpublished report submitted to Gulf Coast Inventory and Monitoring Network, Lafayette, LA.

Some Flowers of the Natchez Trace Parkway



Compass plant: pioneers believed the leaves of the compass plant pointed north and south. The resin of the summer flower was used as a chewing gum by some American Indians.



Larkspur: blooms in summer, all parts of the plant are toxic.



Jacob's ladder: blooms early summer.



Bergamot: summer blooms. Leaves used to spice black tea.



Indian Pink: source of nectar. Blooms in early summer.



Sessile Trillium: blooms in early spring.

...more flowers from the Natchez Trace Parkway



Rue anemone or Windflower: a common springtime flower in forests.



Butterweed: blooms in the spring in moist areas.



Cardinal flower: blooms in late summer, early fall.



Virginia bluebell: an early spring flower. Its nectar is important to nectar feeding insects.



Jewelweed: an important fall flower. It attracts migrating hummingbirds who sip the nectar and feast on the insects who are also attracted to the flower.



Phlox: common along roadsides in the spring.

Flowering trees



Red Buckeye: an understory tree that blooms early in the spring.



Chickasaw plum flower: a small tree that blooms in spring and produces a small, plum-like fruit.



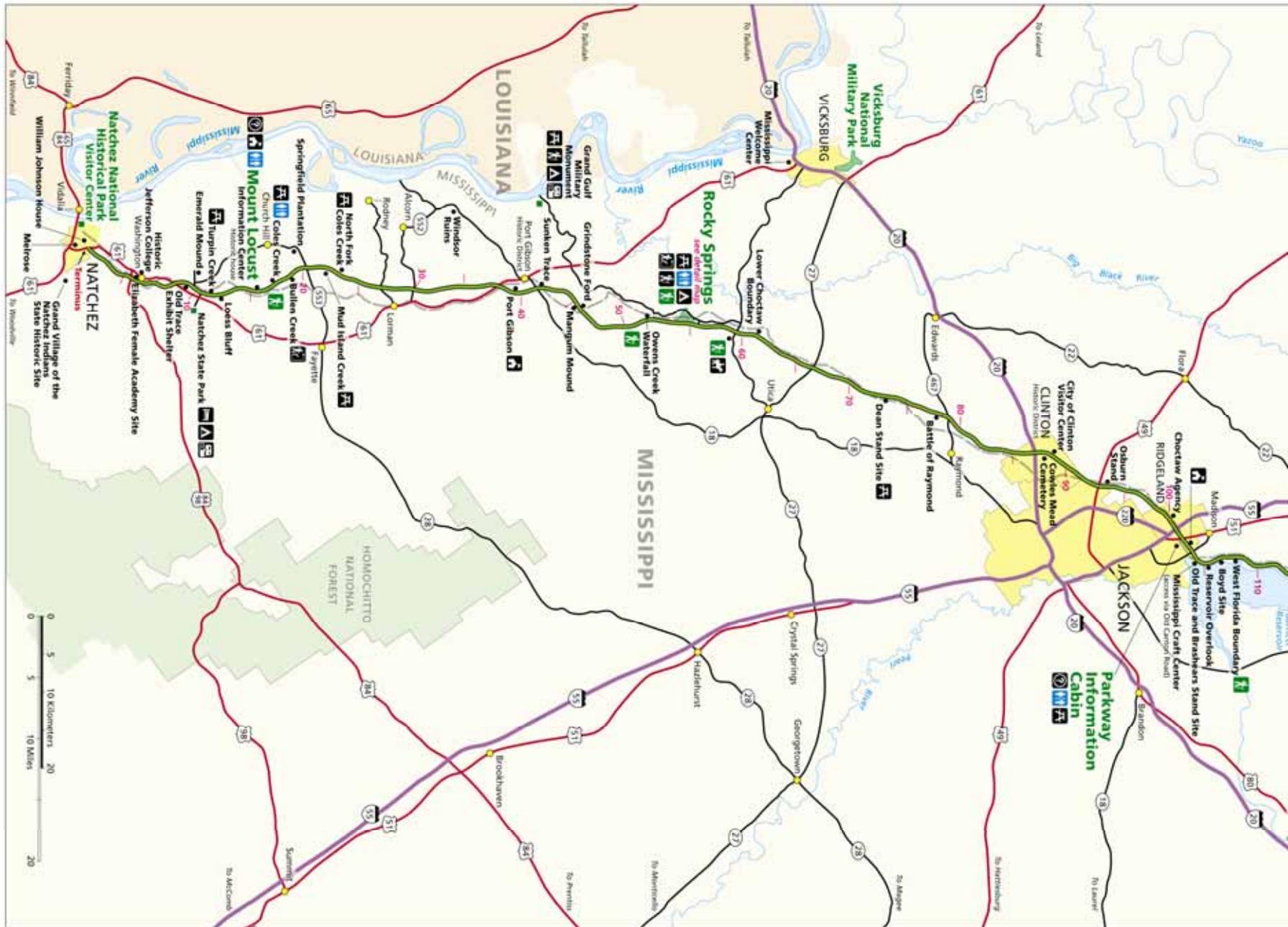
Flowering Dogwood: one of the early spring favorites, the flowers are actually the small yellow petals in the center of the large white bud covers.



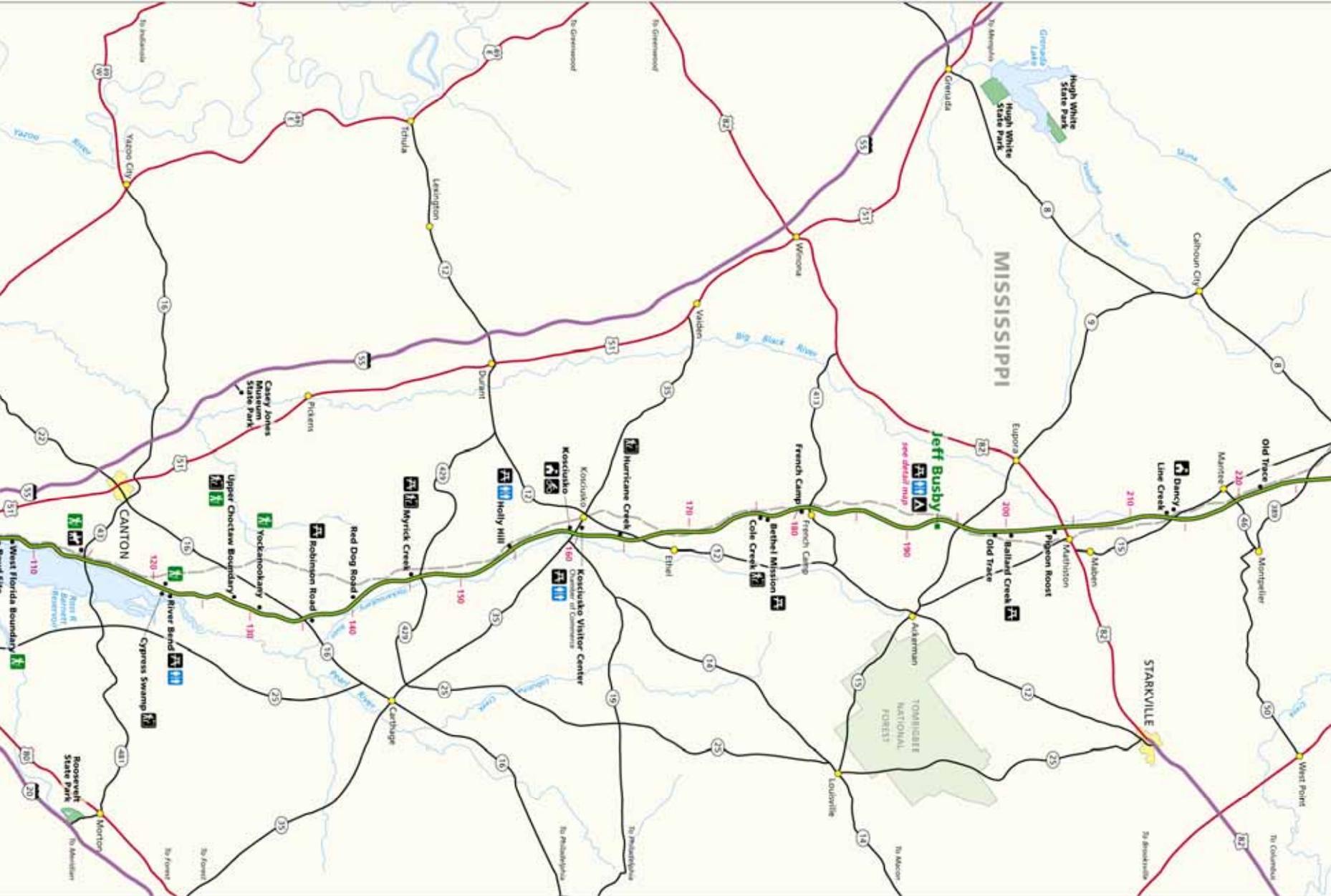
Redbud trees are one of the earliest bloomers on the Natchez Trace Parkway.

Maps of the Natchez Trace Parkway

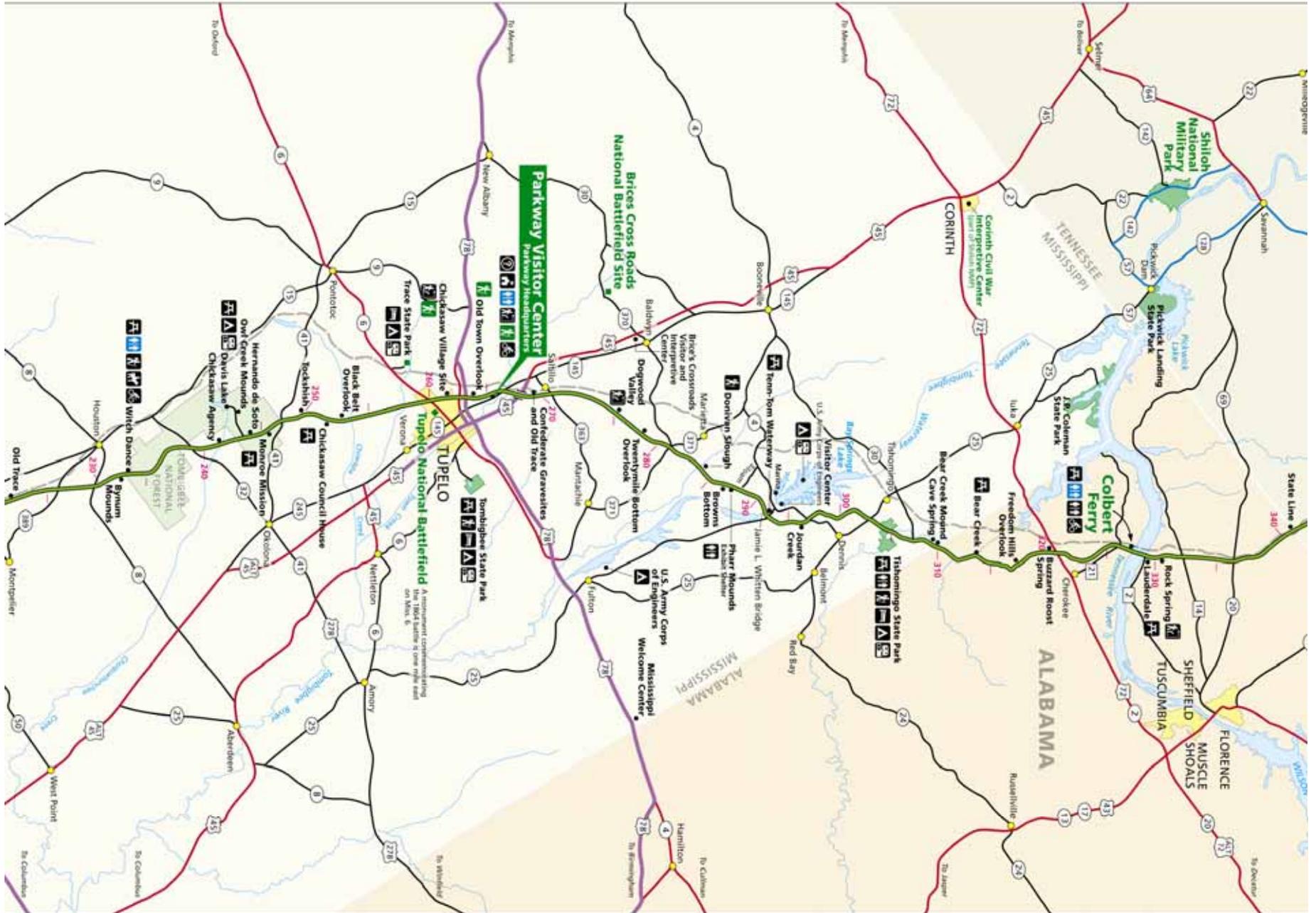
Natchez Trace Parkway from Natchez to Jackson (Milepost 0-113)



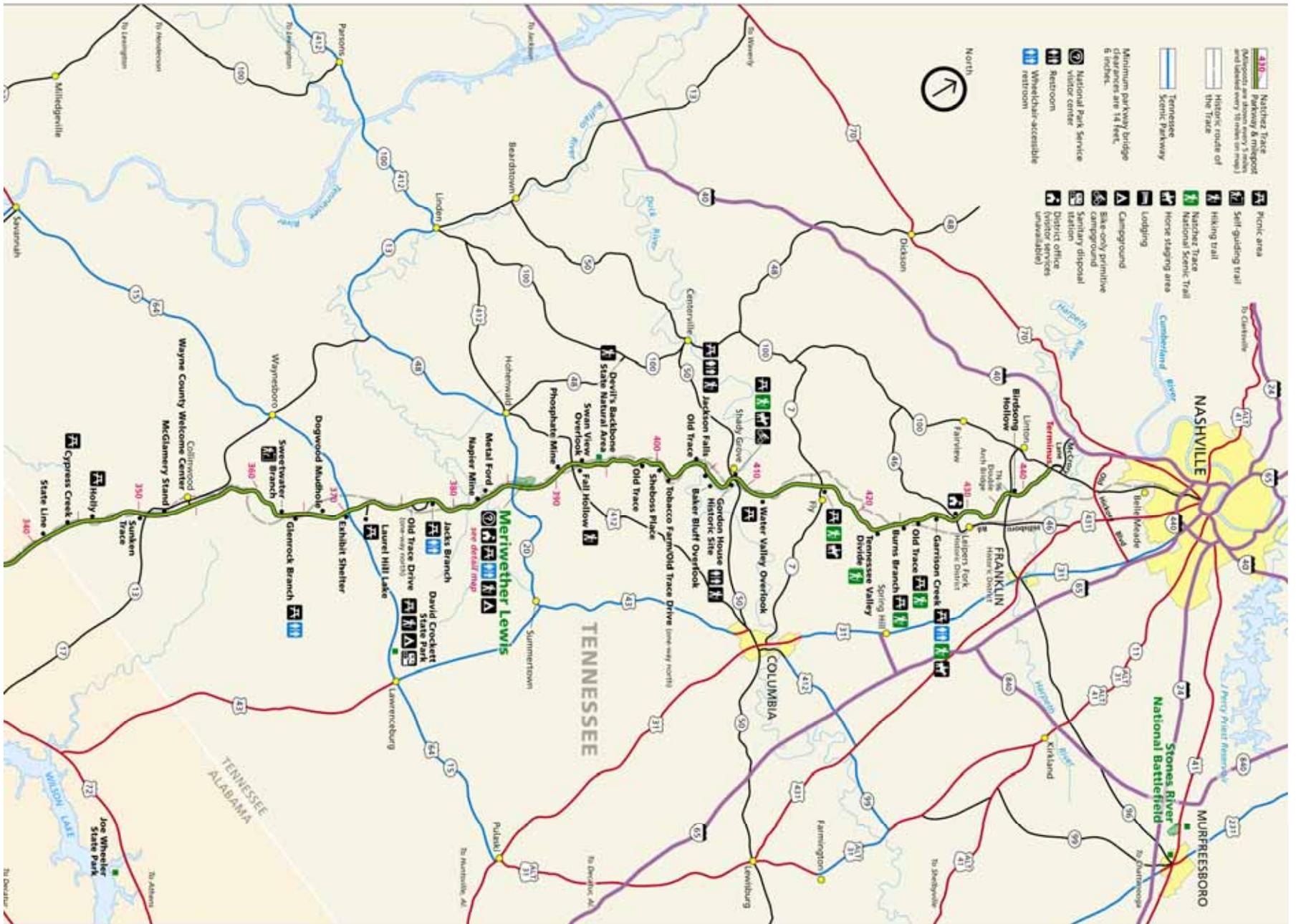
Natchez Trace Parkway between Jackson and Tupelo (Milepost 108-236)



Natchez Trace Parkway between Tupelo and the Tennessee state line (Milepost 230-341)



Natchez Trace Parkway between the Alabama/Tennessee line and Nashville (Milepost 336-444)



Some Sites along the Parkway

Key: Symbols indicate the focus of Natchez Trace Parkway features

-  Road
-  US History
-  American Indian History
-  NPS Information
-  Natural History
-  Picnic area, some with restrooms

 5.1 Elizabeth Female Academy Site. Founded in 1818, this was the first school for women chartered by the state of Mississippi.

 10.3 Emerald Mound. The Natchez and their ancestors built and used this eight-acre ceremonial mound between 1200 and 1730. A trail leads to the top.

 15.5 Mount Locust. Interpretive house tours available at this restored historic stand. Exhibits, restrooms.

 17.5 Coles Creek. Picnic area, restrooms.

 18.4 Bullen Creek. A 15-minute, self-guiding trail goes through a hardwood-pine forest.

 41.5 Sunken Trace. Self-guiding trail. Allow five minutes to walk through a deeply eroded section of the original Trace.

 45.7 Grindstone Ford/Mangum Mound. North-bound travelers considered themselves in wild country once they crossed the ford on Bayou Pierre. Exhibits tell of prehistoric people who lived in this area.

 52.4 Owens Creek Waterfall. Trailhead for national scenic trail.

 54.8 Rocky Springs. A short trail from the upper parking area leads to the old town site. Sections of the Old Trace. Camping, picnicking, restrooms, trailhead for national scenic trail.

 88.1 Cowles Mead Cemetery. Cowles Mead was a stand owner along the Old Trace and acting territorial governor (1806).

 102.4 Parkway Information Cabin. Information, exhibits, restrooms, and access to multi-use trail.

 104.5 Old Trace and Brashears Stand Site. The stand was advertised in 1806 as “a house of entertainment in the wilderness.” Part of the original Trace is nearby.

 106.9 Boyd Site. These burial mounds were built from 750 to 1,250 years ago.

 107.9 West Florida Boundary. This old boundary ran from the Yazoo and Mississippi rivers’ confluence east to the Chattahoochee River. Trailhead for national scenic trail.

 122.0 Cypress Swamp. Half-mile walk through a water tupelo/cypress swamp. Trailhead for national scenic trail on west side of parkway.

 122.6 River Bend. Picnic area, restrooms.

 128.4 Upper Choctaw Boundary. Self-guiding trail and trailhead for national scenic trail.

 130.9 Yockanookany. Trailhead for national scenic trail.

 145.1 Myrick Creek. Self-guiding trail.

 154.3 Holly Hill. Picnic area, restrooms.

 164.3 Hurricane Creek. A short, self-guiding walk identifies plants found in different soil conditions.

 175.6 Cole Creek. Short, self-guiding trail through a water tupelo/bald-cypress swamp.

 180.7 French Camp. Louis LeFleur established a stand here in 1812. A private school opened here in 1822 and is still open. The site is privately operated

 193.1 Jeff Busby. Picnic area, campground, restrooms. Allow 20 minutes to hike a self-guiding trail or drive to one of Mississippi’s highest points, 603 feet.

-  201.3 Ballard Creek. Picnic area.
-  232.4 Bynum Mounds. Prehistoric people built these mounds between 2,050 and 1,800 years ago. Exhibits.
-   233.2 Witch Dance. Horse trail access, picnicking, restrooms.
-  243.1 Davis Lake. Two-miles off of the Natchez Trace Parkway. Access point to U.S. Forest Service picnicking and summer camping area. Owl Creek Mounds. Trails. There is a fee area. Please contact U.S. Forest Service for more information.
-   249.6 Tockshish wayside. John McIntosh settled here in 1770. After the Natchez Trace was declared a National Post Road in 1800, the stand became the midway point where post riders from Natchez and Nashville met up, exchanged mailbags, and returned.
-  259.7 Tupelo National Battlefield. The 1864 battle took place one mile east on Miss. Hwy. 6. (no bus access)
-  261.8 Chickasaw Village Site. Exhibits portray daily life and history at the Chickasaw village that stood here. Trailhead for national scenic trail.
-  263.9 Old Town Overlook. Views of Old Town Creek and its floodplain. Trailhead for national scenic trail.
-   266.0 Parkway Visitor Center and Headquarters. Trailhead for national scenic trail, exhibits, orientation film, information, bike-only primitive campground, restrooms.
-  269.4 Confederate Gravesites and Old Trace. A short walk leads to the graves of 13 unknown Confederate soldiers.
-  275.2 Dogwood Valley. Self-guiding trail. Allow 15 minutes to walk among the dogwood trees.
-  283.3 Donovan Slough. Self-guiding trail. Allow 20 minutes to walk through an area where occasional flooding influences plant varieties.
-  286.7 Pharr Mounds. This 90-acre complex of eight burial mounds was built from about 1,800 to 2,000 years ago. Restrooms.
-   293.2 Tennessee-Tombigbee Waterway makes 459 miles navigable between the Gulf of Mexico and the Tennessee River. U.S. Army Corps of Engineers administers this and their nearby visitor center.
-   304.5 Tishomingo State Park. Trails, picnicking, playground, restrooms. (state fee area)
-  308.4 Cave Spring. A natural cave probably used by American Indians.
-  308.8 Bear Creek Mound. This ceremonial structure was built between 1400 and 1600.
-  308.9 Alabama-Mississippi state line.
-  313.0 Bear Creek. Picnic area. (no restrooms)
-  317.0 Freedom Hills Overlook. A steep, 0.25-mile trail leads to Alabama's highest point on the parkway, 800 feet.
-  320.3 Buzzard Roost Spring. Chickasaw Levi Colbert owned a stand nearby. A short trail leads to Buzzard Roost spring.
-   327.3 Colbert Ferry. Chickasaw George Colbert operated a stand and ferry here in the early 1800s. Picnic area and restroom. Boat launch, fishing.
-  328.7 Lauderdale. Picnic area. (no restroom)
-  330.2 Rock Spring. A walk on this trail along Colbert Creek takes about 20-minutes.
-  341.8 Tennessee-Alabama state line.

-  343.5 Cypress Creek. Picnic area. (no restroom)
-  346.2 Holly. Picnic area. (no restroom)
-  350.5 Sunken Trace. Three sections of the original road show how the route was relocated to avoid mud holes. (short walk)
-  363.0 Sweetwater Branch. Self-guiding trail. A fast-flowing stream parallels this 20-minute walk; seasonal wildflowers.
-  364.5 Glenrock Branch. Picnic area, restrooms.
-  375.8 Old Trace Drive. A one way, 2.5-mile drive along the Old Trace begins here. Not accessible for buses.
-  377.8 Jacks Branch. Picnic area, restrooms.
-  382.8 Metal Ford. Travelers crossed the Buffalo River here; an ironworks and McLish's stand were nearby.
-  385.9 Meriwether Lewis Site. Gravesite of Meriwether Lewis, of Lewis and Clark fame, who died here in 1809. Campground, hiking trails, exhibits, picnic area, restrooms. Information is available seasonally, please call the number listed on page two before you plan your trip.
-  390.7 Phosphate Mine. Short walk along a historic phosphate mining area.
-  391.9 Fall Hollow. Short walk to a waterfall.
-  394 Devils Backbone State Natural Area. (Not accessible for buses.)
-  397.4 Old Trace wayside sign. Here the trace marked the boundary of Chickasaw lands ceded to the United States in 1805 and 1816.
-  401.4 Tobacco Farm. Exhibits explain tobacco growing. A one-way-north, two-mile drive along the Old Trace begins here. Drive is not accessible for buses.

-  403.7 Old Trace. Take a pleasant walk on a 2,000-foot section of the original trace.
-  404.7 Jackson Falls. Named for Andrew Jackson, the falls are on the intermittent Jackson Branch that empties into the Duck River.
-  407.7 Gordon House Historic Site. From 1801 until traffic on the trace declined, the Gordons ran a ferry across Duck River here. Nature trail to Duck River.
-  423.9 Tennessee Valley Divide. The 1796 this boundary between the United States to the north and the Chickasaw Nation to the south.
-  425.4 Burns Branch. Picnic area. Trailhead for national scenic trail. (no restrooms)
-  426.3 Old Trace. The U.S. Army cleared this section in 1801–02 and continued southward with consent of the Chickasaw Nation. Trailhead for national scenic trail.
-  427.6 Garrison Creek. Named for a nearby 1801–02 U.S. Army post. Trailhead for Natchez Trace National Scenic Trail. Restrooms.
-  444.0 Northern Terminus. Intersection with Tenn. Hwy. 100.

There are many more sites to enjoy along the Natchez Trace Parkway. The places listed above are most suitable for visits by classes. If there is something else which interests you, please contact the Natchez Trace Parkway.



Logistical Information for a Successful Field Trip

Please schedule at least three weeks in advance.

Safety: Please review and be aware of safety concerns addressed in the safety lesson available on our website, or through email. Students should be reminded that the Natchez Trace Parkway is a natural area, and they should exhibit caution used in any outdoor area. If working with a park ranger, please notify him or her of any special concerns or medical conditions. Please be sure that every group has at least one adult with a functional cell phone. But please note that there are many places along the Parkway without cell phone coverage.

Map: Carry your map with you. A map of Natchez Trace Parkway is include in this guide. Additional maps may be obtained online or by calling the numbers below. If you need specific directions to your destination call ahead of time.

Where to meet: Unless other arrangement are made, with rangers, students, teachers, and chaperones please meet at your designated Natchez Trace Parkway information center. Those would be one of the following: Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center in Tupelo, Parkway Information Cabin in Ridgeland, Mount Locust Historic Site, or the Meriwether Lewis Site. Please be sure you know exactly where you are meeting a park ranger. Call if you have any questions.

Restrooms: When you arrive, your students may need to use the restroom. Please designate one teacher to meet with a ranger, while other teachers assist in a restroom break. Most restrooms have only one or two stalls, so please take this into consideration.

Discipline: The teacher is responsible for discipline during the program. Please remind your chaperones that they will be expected to assist with this duty. Rangers should not be expected to discipline students.

Lunch: Lunches will be kept on the bus for the duration of the program. Please make arrangements with a park ranger for a place for students to eat their lunches. Contact the nearest visitor center for information.

Weather Conditions: The day before your site visit, please remind students to wear appropriate footwear and clothing for a program that includes some outdoor time. Flip flops and sandals are not recommended. Temperatures and weather may be unpredictable. Rain jackets or ponchos rather than umbrellas are recommended. Call if weather is a concern.

Chaperones: Large classes or groups may need to be divided. When you schedule your program, a ranger will explain what size groups need to be. Please have groups divided before you leave your school. We require that a minimum of one teacher and/or chaperone be available for every ten students to maintain a positive and rewarding learning experience. Please share materials with the chaperones so they are prepared for the program and have the opportunity to interact with the students.

Late Arrival: Please call to notify us of your late arrival. Late arrivals may impact other scheduled groups and will result in modification of your scheduled activities. Being more that 15 minutes late may result in your forfeiting your entire program.

Cancellations: Please contact us immediately.

Phone Numbers

Natchez Trace Parkway Visitor Center , Tupelo: (662) 680-4027 or 1-800-305-7417
Parkway Information Cabin at Ridgeland: (601) 898-9417
Mount Locust Historic Site: (601) 445-4211

Parkway Emergency: 911

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