

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior
www.nps.gov/biso



GO BIG CHALLENGE - 2025 -

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Welcome to the GO BIG 2025 CHALLENGE!

Every Season Gives a Reason to Go Big in the Parks!

The GO BIG 2025 Challenge is back for another exciting year, and this time, we're inviting you to experience our parks like never before with the new theme: "Every Season Gives a Reason to Go Big in the Parks!" There's always something to discover in spring, summer, fall, or winter, so you can enjoy the parks all year round.

While Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area and Obed Wild and Scenic River continue to offer environmentally sustainable recreation opportunities, the Manhattan Project National Historical Park, nestled in the urban community of Oak Ridge, remains a surprising oasis of outdoor fun. Whether you're exploring on foot, bike, watercraft, or horseback, you'll earn points as you engage with each park. As you work toward your point goal, look for the unique activities and features that make every season in these parks worth exploring.

This year's booklet features four season categories, winter, spring, summer, and fall. Under each season category, there are subcategories with questions or task to complete during that specific time of year along with their point values. A total of 100 points is needed to earn your unique Go Big 2025 Challenge patch and each participant who earns 200 points will receive a special award with this year's logo! This year the Go Big Challenge includes a 'Lightning Challenge' option. This mini challenge is geared for explorers on shorter visits to learn more for less points! For more information on the 'Lightning Challenge', stop by one of the parks' visitor centers or call 423-286-7275.

Pick and choose from the categories and questions to find the ones that are right for you. Complete a few or conquer them all; the choice is yours to make! We encourage you to embark on this adventure, exploring all three parks, enjoying what each season brings, and taking part in preserving these natural treasures for generations to come. Remember, every season is a reason to Go Big in the parks—how will you take on the challenge this year? The adventure is yours to discover!





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Means location is fully accessible.



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Looking Cool on the Trail

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas in Big South Fork, Obed and Manhattan Project during the winter season of 2025.

1. Earn 2 points for every mile hiked in the winter season.

_____ :Total miles

2. Earn 2 points for every mile pedaled in the winter season.

_____ :Total miles

3. Earn 2 points for every mile riding equestrian in Big South Fork in the winter season.

_____ :Total miles

4. Earn 2 points for every mile paddled in the winter season.

_____ :Total miles

Helping with the Chill

Help your National Parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the winter season.

_____ **5. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2025 winter season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Trail: _____

6. ♿ Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2025 to see how you can assist with special events and other projects in the winter season. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

1 point for every hour worked. Total hours worked: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Winter Events and Programs

7. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the winter:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points



Camping in the Cool

Camp in the parks this winter to earn a cool 10 points! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

8. **10 Points per permit:** Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this winter. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Interpretive Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

9. **10 Points each camping trip:** Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this winter -- Bandy Creek Campground, Station Camp Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

Campground(s): _____

_____ :Total points

10. **10 Points:** Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this winter.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Bundle Up Birding

With the trees bare and food becoming scarce, many birds travel in large flocks and out in the open. Although there are fewer bird species, winter brings unique opportunities to observe birds for long periods and observe the personalities of individual birds. Go to our website and download "*A Checklist of Birds in Big South Fork*" at www.nps.gov/biso/upload/BISO-bird-guide-taxonomic-order.pdf and see how many bird observations you can complete below.

11. 1 point each: See how many birds you can identify while out in the parks during the winter season. Give yourself one point for each species you can correctly identify visually or by its song. Each bird species is counted only once per season.

Species: _____

_____: **Total points for winter birding**

____ **12. ♿ 3 points:** In winter, golden-crowned kinglets are the smallest bird in the park, weighing between one and three paper clips (.1-.3 oz). Even so, they manage to thrive in freezing temperatures. Name three avian adaptations that allow kinglets, and other small birds such as chickadees, and nuthatches to make it through winter.

Answer: _____

____ **13. ♿ 3 points:** Some finches, like pine siskins and redpolls, are known for "irruptions," where they travel great distances in winter in search of food. While visiting the parks, observe any unusual or large-scale movements of finches during the winter. What species were involved, and what environmental factors might have driven these irruptions?

Species: _____

Movement Observed: _____ Date: _____

____ **14. 3 points:** In winter, birds often rely on galls — small, protective growths formed on plants by insects — as a key food source. The larvae inside can provide essential nutrients during the cold months when other food is scarce. Galls can easily be seen in the stems of tall grassland plants like goldenrod. Visit one of the parks' fields and locate a gall on a plant. What plant was the gall in? Is there evidence of an animal eating the dormant inhabitant? Observation: _____

Gall Host Species: _____

Date: _____

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**





Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Cold Never Bothered Me Anyway Critters

Winter is a time where it seems everything has quieted down. However, many species have remarkable adaptations that allow them to endure the cold, creating a beautiful example of resilience and life even in the harshest months. Complete the activities below during the winter season to learn more about the animals in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **15. ♿ 3 points:** Central stonerollers, like many fish, don't hibernate or brumate in winter. Instead, they enter a temporary state called torpor. Each of these strategies has evolved in response to specific environmental pressures. What are the evolutionary advantages of torpor over hibernation or brumation in seasonal aquatic environments? How might factors like water temperature, stability, and oxygen levels play a role in these differing adaptations?

Answer: _____

Date: _____

____ **16. ♿ 3 points:** It is commonly believed that woolly bear caterpillars can predict the severity of the upcoming winter. Unfortunately, this is just a myth, but woolly bear caterpillars do have an incredible ability to survive freezing temperatures unlike most insects. What adaptations allow woolly bear caterpillars to withstand cold winter conditions, and how do these strategies compare to other insects' overwintering techniques in the Cumberland Plateau?

Answer: _____

Date: _____

____ **17. ♿ 2 points:** Wood frogs survive winter by snuggling into leaf litter on the forest floor, which gives them just enough protection to survive freezing temperatures while they are cryogenically frozen and await spring to thaw out. Draw a picture of a wood frog sleeping on the forest floor, using a leaf as a cozy little blanket. You may choose what they use for a pillow.

Draw:



____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Plants Working through the Winter

While plants in winter may lose their vibrant colors and enter a dormant state, the woods are far from lifeless; they are alive and bustling with beauty and resilience. Complete the activities below during the winter season to learn more about the plants in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.



____ **18. 3 points:** Winter floods and summer storms affect cobble bar habitats by washing logs and other debris over them, damaging many of the woody plants. This makes it so that the primary species found here are shrubs, grasses, and forbs. Visit a cobble bar in the parks and identify one currently growing plant species.

Species: _____

Date: _____

____ **19. 3 points:** Did you know that some believe that pine cones can help to predict the conditions of the upcoming winter? It is said that the more pine cones that are found on the ground, the harsher the winter will be. Big South Fork and Obed are home to over five species of pine trees. Find a group of fallen pine cones in the park, take a photo, and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.

____ **20. ♿ 3 points:** Prescribed burns are typically conducted in winter months and are used for fields management and wildfire prevention. What are three benefits of this practice?

Answer: _____



____ **21. ♿ 2 points:** Though they grow in the parks year round, Christmas ferns (*Polystichum acrostichoides*) still have a wintery name.

Where does this name come from? _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Winter Season: January 1-March 19



History by the Hearth

Cuddle up at a computer this winter and learn about the history of Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project. Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr/oak-ridge and select 'Learn About the Park' to find the answers.

____ 22. 2 points: In the early 1900's, the Stearns Coal and Lumber Company, located in McCreary County, Kentucky, employed a diverse workforce, which at the time was unusual for the Upper South. The Black people that lived in the area of the Big South Fork were known as the Invisible People. Vintage photographs of the mining, logging and railroad operations show the presence of People(s) of Color employed by Stearns Coal and Lumber Company.

Name a Black person who was a Lumber Camp boss.

Answer: _____

____ 23. 2 points: There were many different Tribes that used the Obed River area for hunting, gathering and the sandstone bluffs for shelter. One Tribe became the most prominent and largest in the entire Southeast region before the 19th century. What Tribe was this?

Answer: _____

____ 24. 2 points: In 1944, Manhattan Project employed around 10,000 young women to operate the arrays at the Oak Ridge Y-12 Electromagnetic Isotope Separation plant. Their job was to separate the light uranium 235 from the heavier uranium 238. Young women were chosen for this intricate work because they were more efficient than the scientists who had a tendency to overthink the adjustments.

What were these young women known as?

Answer: _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



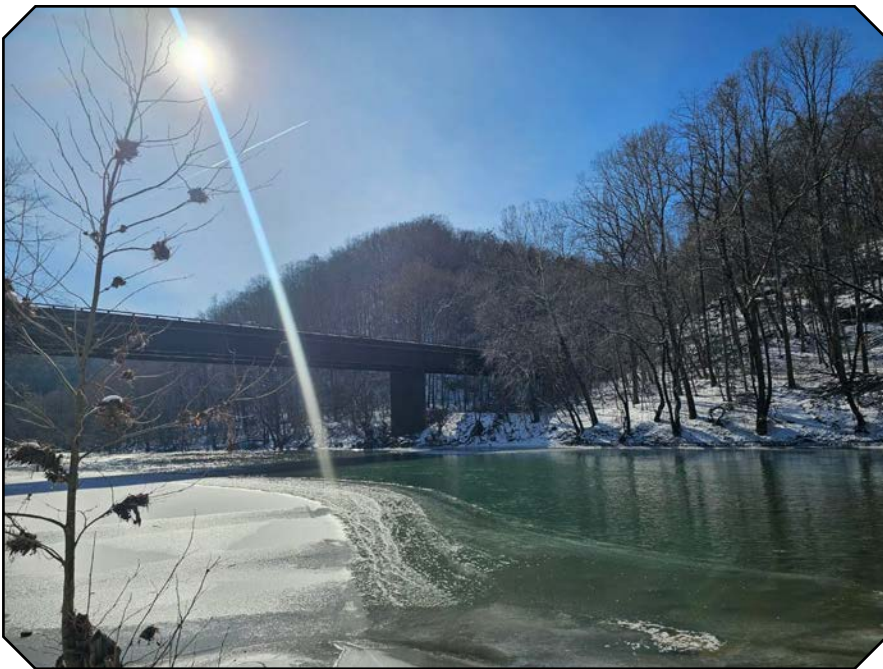
Winter Season: January 1-March 19

Safety Shiver

Everyone should be able to Go Big and enjoy their time at the parks. One way to do this, is to enjoy the parks with safety in mind. If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, call 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow us on social media and look for the posts with "#SafetySaturday."

____ **25. ♿ 2 Points:** Hypothermia occurs when the body loses heat faster than it can produce it. This can be deadly. What are three things you can do to prevent hypothermia?
Answer: _____

____ **26. ♿ 2 Points:** Take a picture of you properly layered in cold weather and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.



____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Spring Forth on the Trails

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas in Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the spring season of 2025.

27. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the spring season.

____ :Total miles

28. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the spring season.

____ :Total miles

29. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian in Big South Fork NRRRA in the spring season.

____ :Total miles

30. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled in the spring season.

____ :Total miles

Helping Spring Clean

Help your National Parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the spring season.

____ **31. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2025 spring season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Trail: _____

32. ♿ Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2025 to see how you can assist with special events and other projects in the spring season. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____

____ :Total points

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Spring Events and Programs

33. ♿ 10 Points for each of the major spring events attended the parks:

_____ Spring Planting & Music Festival: Bandy Creek - April 26

_____ Decoration Day - Saturday, May 3rd and the entire month of May

_____ :Total points

34. ♿ 10 Points: Attend one of the spring Tennis Court Dances held by the Manhattan Project NHP. Contact the visitor center at 865-482-1942 or follow us on Facebook to find out when the programs are being held. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points

35. ♿ Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the spring:

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points

Waking Up with Nature

Camp in the parks this spring and enjoy life blooming all around you! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

_____ **36. 10 Points per permit:** Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this spring. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ **37. ♿ 10 Points per camping trip:** Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this spring -- Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

38. ♿ 10 Points: Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this spring.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Birds of a Feather Migrate Together

In spring, millions of birds migrate to and through the Big South Fork River to return to their breeding grounds. Spring is a very exciting season for birders, as an incredible diversity of birds rush by in just a couple weeks. Go to our website and download "*A Checklist of Birds in Big South Fork*" at www.nps.gov/biso/upload/BISO-bird-guide-taxonomic-order.pdf and see how many bird observations you can complete below.

39. 1 point each: See how many birds you can identify while out in the parks during the spring season. Give yourself one point for each species you can correctly identify visually or by its song. Each bird species is counted only once per season.

Species: _____

_____: **Total points for spring birding**

____ **40. 3 points:** In spring, you may observe flocks of hyper-social birds such as blackbirds or starlings in fields and urban settings near the park. Flocking offers protection from predators and helps with foraging. Find one of these large flocks in the parks. Where did they gather, and what activity were they engaged in?

Location: _____ Date: _____

Activity: _____

____ **41. ♿ 3 points:** The American Ornithological Society (AOS) has announced that they will begin the process of renaming some North American birds named after people in favor of names that provide information about their appearance, range, behavior, etc. Many of the birds that are to be renamed occur in the parks, such as Cooper's hawk and Swainson's warbler. Research and suggest a new name for one of the bird species on the park checklist named after a person.

Answer: _____

____ **42. 3 points:** Riparian bird species, like the Blue Heron and belted kingfisher, depend on healthy streams and rivers for food and nesting sites. Their presence can indicate good water quality, as they thrive in clean, well-oxygenated waters. Visit the Blue Heron Mining Community in Stearns, Kentucky and see if you can find any actual blue herons (or other riparian bird species). What do you think is the leading cause of the presence or absence of these birds?

Species: _____

Answer: _____



_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Critters In Abundance

In the spring, many animals are waking up, increasing the activity of animals in the parks. This season brings on feeding, breeding, and migration as the animals take advantage of the abundance of resources and comfortable weather. Complete the activities below during the spring season to learn more about animals in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **43. ♿ 3 points:** Spring brings increased human activity in parks, which can disrupt bat populations. How can visitors minimize their impact on roosting and foraging bats, and why is it important to protect bat populations during this critical time of emergence and reproduction?
Answer: _____



____ **44. 3 points:** Common five-lined skinks are often found in forested areas, and near human structures and are known for their vibrant, blue tails. However, only juveniles have blue tails, and the color fades with age. Find a common five-lined skink in the parks. What do you think the advantage is of only juveniles having their famous coloration?
Observation: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

____ **45. 3 points:** Spring rain often creates temporary pools called vernal pools that frogs use for laying eggs. Find a vernal pool in one of the parks. Did you observe any frogs? What stage of life (eggs, tadpoles, adults) did you find?
Observation: _____
Location: _____ Date: _____

____ **46. 3 points:** Spring brings increased activity among insectivorous fish, like bluegill, which feed on the abundant insects emerging from the water. These fish play a crucial role in controlling insect populations and supporting the food web. Take a visit down to one of the parks' rivers and try to find a bluegill. If you find one, what was it eating? If you don't find one, were there any insects that bluegill could have eaten?
Observation: _____
Location: _____ Date: _____

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Blooming Plants

In springtime, the parks begins to burst with color as everything begins to fruit and bloom. This season is an ideal time to explore and enjoy the rich variety of flowering plants, with new wonders greeting you at every turn. Complete the activities below during the spring season to learn more about the plants in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **47. 3 points:** Eastern hemlocks (*Tsuga canadensis*) are an at-risk species found in Big South Fork and Obed that bloom in the spring. These trees are becoming infested with a non-native insect, called woolly adelgids, and are currently being treated to prevent the spread. Locate one of these trees within the parks. Does it look like it has an infestation? Do you notice any markings that could indicate treatment?

Location: _____ Date: _____

Observation: _____



____ **48. 3 points:** Big South Fork and Obed are home to several of the world's remaining cobble bars. These are very biodiverse areas that can only be found alongside free flowing rivers. Here, you can find persimmon trees (*Diospyros kaki*) that bloom in late spring. Find one of these trees in the parks and take an estimate how many fruits it has.

Location: _____ Date: _____

Number of fruits: _____

____ **49. 2 points for each greenway:** Oaks aren't the only tree in Oak Ridge marking a point on the map. Lending their names to the hills and ridges throughout the area, trees helped shape Oak Ridge during the Manhattan Project and today. A few of the greenways in Oak Ridge bear the name of native trees. While exploring the park, visit these greenways and identify their iconic tree.

Greenways: _____ Date: _____

____ **50. 2 points:** In spring, many wildflowers bloom in vibrant colors. When visiting the parks, look for a mix of wildflowers. Describe the colors you observe and any patterns in their distribution.

Description: _____

Date: _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Springtime Stories

Not all spring days allow for recreating in the parks. Spend time learning about park history and culture on the days that you just can't get outside. Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr/oak-ridge and select 'Learn About the Park' to find the answers.

____ **51. ♿ 2 points:** The bizarre but true tale of the Devil of Scott County started when Mr. Cruis Sexton of Scott County, a soldier that had been in China and while there, had seen many statues that were enormous in size. When he returned home, he decided that he would build a statue of his own. Cruis built the "Devil" out of bed clay, it was done with great detail and lifelike features. It was larger than a man and weighed more than a ton. Cruis moved the "Devil" to the home of a relative. The statue was then moved to the Helenwood train station. People from different parts of the country would stop at Helenwood to see the "Devil", now laid in a coffin. How much did people pay to view the statue? Answer: _____



____ **52. ♿ 2 points:** The towns and former railroad junctions around Obed Wild and Scenic River were originally named in alphabetical order for the train stops along the route. Flooding within the Obed area is a common occurrence. The flood of 1940 destroyed the Nemo bridge, and it was never rebuilt, thus ending the Catoosa Railroad. What town's name was changed in order to keep the alphabet sequence? Answer: _____

____ **53. ♿ 2 points:** The location for Oak Ridge Manhattan Project was an ideal spot for a secret city. The natural ridges and valleys of East Tennessee allowed for the separation of the proposed plants. With only 1000 families at the beginning of the war, the population increased to well over 75,000 by the end of the war. On what date did General Grover approve the Oak Ridge location for part of the Manhattan Project? Answer: _____


____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**




Spring Season: March 20-June 19

Safety is a Breath of Fresh Air

Springtime weather beckons us to get outside and recreate safely! If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, call 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow us on social media and look for the posts with "#SafetySaturday."

____ 54.  **2 Points:** Big South Fork and Obed are happy to have a healthy bear population. Healthy bears generally run away when humans are near. Help us keep bears wild by properly storing all food and scented items while you're away from your campsite. Name five items that should be stored in a food storage bin (bear box), a bear canister, or hung from a bear bag while camping. Answer: _____

____ 55.  **2 Points:** Take a photo of you and your "beary" clean campsite and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.



____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Sweatin' It Out on the Trails

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas in Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the summer season of 2025.

56. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

57. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

58. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian in Big South Fork NRRRA in the summer season.

_____ :Total miles

59. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled in the summer season.


_____ :Total miles

Summer Love for Your Parks

Help your National Parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the park at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the summer season.

_____ **60. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2025 summer season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Trail: _____

61.  Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2025 to see how you can assist with special events and other projects in the summer season. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Summer Events and Programs

62. **10 Points for each of the major summer events attended at the parks:**

- _____ Obed Photo Contest Reveal - August 22
- _____ Big South Fork Photo Contest Reveal - September 5
- _____ Haunting in the Hills Storytelling Festival - September 20
- _____ :Total points



63. **10 Points:** Attend one of the Tennis Court Dances held by the Manhattan Project NHP. Contact the visitor center at 865-482-1942 or follow us on Facebook to find out when the programs are being held. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Dates: _____
_____ :Total points



64. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the summer season:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.
Dates: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21



Heatin' Up around Camp

There's plenty of shade in the parks to beat the heat while camping at Big South Fork and Obed. Bring the whole family! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

65. 10 Points per permit: Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this summer. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

66. ♿ 10 Points per camping trip: Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this summer -- Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

67. ♿ 10 Points: Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this summer.

Date(s) Camped: _____
_____: **Total points**

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Time to Fly!

Summer brings long days for more hours to see more birds. Additionally, baby birds begin to fledge and explore the world outside the nest for the first time, making for some adorable and hilarious wildlife viewing opportunities. Go to our website and download "*A Checklist of Birds in Big South Fork*" at www.nps.gov/biso/upload/BISO-bird-guide-taxonomic-order.pdf and see how many bird observations you can complete below.

68. 1 point each: See how many birds you can identify while out in the parks during the spring season. Give yourself one point for each species you can correctly identify visually or by its song. Each bird species is counted only once per season.

Species: _____

_____: **Total points for summer birding**

____ **69. 3 points:** Forest thrushes, like the wood thrush and hermit thrush often forage on the forest floor, searching for food. Take a hike in one of the parks' forests and find a foraging thrush. What kind of food was it eating, and what techniques did it use to find its food?

Species: _____

Observation: _____ Date: _____

____ **70. 3 points:** Big South Fork and Obed are home to three mimids: northern mockingbird, brown thrasher, and gray catbird. Mimids are known for their incredible ability to mimic bird noises, and sometimes non-bird noises. Observe a mimid in the parks and see if you can recognize any of the bird songs it's mimicking.

Species: _____

Songs: _____ Date: _____

____ **71. ♿ 3 points:** Urban-adapted birds such as sparrows, swallows, and pigeons, often make use of human-made structures for nesting and roosting. Did you observe any birds nesting on or around human structures at the Manhattan Project sites? What types of structures were they using, and how did they interact with the urban environment?

Species: _____

Structure Used: _____ Date: _____

_____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Critter Heat Wave

Summer months are full of energy for the parks' fauna with animals foraging for food, raising their young, and much more. The warm, sunny days provide an abundance of resources, making it an ideal time to witness wildlife in their most active season. Complete the activities below during the summer season to learn more about the animals in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

_____ **72. 3 points:** Beaver dams help create ponds and wetlands, which store water during dry summer months. Observe a beaver dam along a river or stream in the parks. How do you think the water retained by these structures benefits other wildlife during the summer?

Answer: _____


Location: _____ Date: _____

_____ **73. 3 points:** Salamanders rely on moist, shady habitats to avoid drying out in the heat of summer. While visiting the parks, did you observe any salamanders near streams, springs, or other water sources? How far from the water were they, and what do you think helps them stay moist in their environment?

Observation: _____

Answer: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

_____ **74.  3 points:** Saturniid moths are some of the most colorful animals found in the parks, and are known for their short adult lifespan, often living just a few days to reproduce. Some of the best spots to find saturniids are buildings near wooded areas that are lit at night, such as our parks' visitor centers and bath houses. Visit one of these locations at night or in the early morning and try to find one. Whether or not you were lucky enough to observe a saturniid, describe the moths you did observe, and if you can, identify the species for **2 bonus points**.

Observation: _____

Location: _____ Species: _____ Date: _____

_____ **75. 3 points:** In the summer, shiners often school in large numbers in the shallow, sunlit areas of streams. These fish are an important food source for larger predatory fish. Observe a school of shiners in a stream or river in the parks. How did they move through the water? How does the schooling behavior help protect the fish from predators?

Observation: _____

Answer: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Plants That Like It Hot Hot Hot

Summer brings warmer weather to the parks, creating the ideal conditions for plants to bear fruit. This is also the perfect time for visitors to explore the river and discover all that it has to offer. Complete the activities below during the summer season to learn more about the plants the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

____ **76. 3 points:** Hog peanut (*Amphicarpaea bracteata*) blooms in late summer and can easily be confused with kudzu (*Pueraria montana* var. *lobata*), a non-native plant in the southeastern United States. Kudzu has hairy stems and can be found creeping up trees whereas hog peanut stays primarily on the ground. Find one of these two species in the parks and identify which one you're looking at.

Species: _____ Date: _____



____ **77. 3 points:** Cumberland azalea (*Rhododendron cumberlandense*) is a small shrub that grows up to six feet tall and is made up of irregular, open branches. Its leaves are thin, irregular, and green. The flowers grow in groups of up to seven, are funnel shaped, and are orange in color. They consist of five petals and their stamens extend out of the flower. Keep a look out in the parks and note when you see one.

Location: _____

Date: _____

____ **78. 2 points:** Common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) is in full bloom in summer, attracting pollinators. While visiting the parks, find a patch of milkweed and describe the flower clusters and any insects visiting them.

Description: _____

Date: _____

____ **79. 2 points:** Pawpaw (*Asimina triloba*) is a small tree that grows in deep, rich, moist soil. It has large, simple leaves that are broad near the tip, and it produces edible fruit in the late summer or early fall. When visiting the parks, locate a pawpaw tree and describe what the fruit looks like.

Description: _____

Date: _____

____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Plan Your Adventure

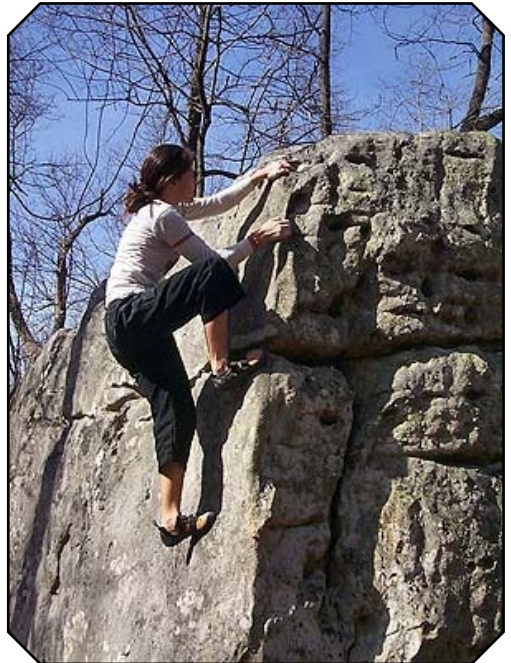
Summertime planning is essential. Go to the park's websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr/oak-ridge and select 'Things to Do' to find the answers.

_____ **80. ♿ 2 points:** Backcountry camping is a popular activity for visitors who enjoy getting back to the seclusion of nature. To be backcountry camping is to camp away from developed areas in the parks. There are wide variety of trails available for horseback riders, mountain bike riders, backpackers, hunters and even the river for paddlers to come and enjoy the great outdoors. Remember, you will need to obtain a permit when backcountry camping in the parks. What are the requirements when setting up your backcountry campsite?

Answer: _____

_____ **81. ♿ 2 points:** One of the most popular forms of climbing in Obed is bouldering. A strong grip along with dexterity and nimbleness is needed to scale the different levels of boulders. The boulder levels range from V0 to V7, so no matter what level of climber you are there will be a boulder there for you to conquer. Where is the boulder field located at Obed?

Answer: _____



_____ **82. ♿ 2 points:** A guided tour is a good way to learn about the history of Oak Ridge during the Manhattan Project. A guided bus tour is offered by the Department of Energy in partnership with the American Museum of Science and Energy that includes stops at Oak Ridge National Laboratory, K-25 History Center and New Hope Visitor Center at Y-12.

What site does the Department of Energy public tour not visit?

Answer: _____

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Summer Season: June 20-September 21

Safety for the Win!

Don't let summer fun turn into a safety hazard! If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, call 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow us on social media and look for the posts with "#SafetySaturday."

____ **83. ♿ 2 points:** Paddling and swimming at Big South Fork and Obed can be a great way to beat the summer heat. The river levels can change drastically as wild rivers. Paddling and boating (including tubing) requires a PFD on board for each person. While not required when swimming, we highly recommend wearing a PFD. What does PFD stand for?

Answer: _____

____ **84. ♿ 2 points:** Ticks can be a real pest at our parks in the summer months. Use bug spray and perform frequent tick checks after recreating. Some ticks carry harmful diseases. Most of these diseases can be prevented by removing attached ticks within 24 hours. Name one tick-borne illness and list one sign or symptom.

Answer: _____



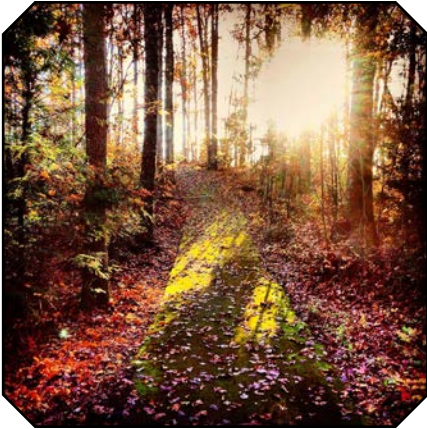
____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Fall Trail Frolic

Points earned for miles must be completed on trails, riverways, or designated use areas in Big South Fork, Obed, and Manhattan Project during the fall season of 2025.



85. Earn 1 point for every mile hiked in the fall season.
_____ :Total miles

86. Earn 1 point for every mile pedaled in the fall season.
_____ :Total miles

87. Earn 1 point for every mile riding equestrian in Big South Fork NRRA in the fall season.
_____ :Total miles

88. Earn 1 point for every mile paddled in the fall season.
_____ :Total miles

Autumn Assist

Help your National Parks by becoming a park volunteer. Contact the parks at biso_information@nps.gov for more information and to sign up! All points earned in this section must be completed during the fall season.

_____ **89. 50 Points:** Sign up as a Trail Keeper. Volunteers must do a complete check of the trail during the 2025 fall season and turn in their required paperwork to the Volunteer Coordinator to receive the points.

Trail: _____

90. ♿ Be a Park Volunteer! Contact the parks in 2025 to see how you can assist with special events and other projects in the fall season. Sign up by email at biso_information@nps.gov (Trail Keeper time does not count on this section.)

1 point for every hour worked: Total hours worked: _____
_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Fall Events and Programs

91. **10 Points** for each of the major fall events attended at the parks:

_____ Blue Heron Ghost Mine - October 18

_____ :Total points

92. **10 Points:** Attend one of the Tennis Court Dances held by the Manhattan Project NHP. Contact the visitor center at 865-482-1942 or follow us on Facebook to find out when the programs are being held. Don't forget to bring your dancing shoes!

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points

93. **Receive 5 points for every ranger-led program at Big South Fork, Obed, or Manhattan Project you attend during the fall season:**

Some programs are wheelchair accessible.

Dates: _____

_____ :Total points

'Tis the Season to Camp

Fall is one of the most popular times to camp at Big South Fork and Obed. Book your campsite early! Reservations may be made by calling 877-444-6777 or online at www.recreation.gov.

_____ **94. 10 Points per permit:** Obtain a permit and go backcountry camping at Big South Fork or Obed this fall. Permits can be obtained at Bandy Creek Visitor Center, Blue Heron Visitor Center, Obed Visitor Center, or online at www.pay.gov.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ **95. 10 Points per camping trip:** Go camping at Big South Fork's campgrounds this fall -- Bandy Creek Campground, Blue Heron Campground, Station Camp Campground, Bear Creek Campground, and Alum Ford Campground.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ **96. 10 Points:** Go camping at Rock Creek Campground at Obed this fall.

Date(s) Camped: _____

_____ :Total points

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Winged Leaf Peepers

Fall migration is more of a steady stream than a whitewater rapid of birds, allowing for a more relaxed experience, and with easier views as the autumn leaves start to fall. Go to our website and download “*A Checklist of Birds in Big South Fork*” at www.nps.gov/biso/upload/BISO-bird-guide-taxonomic-order.pdf and see how many bird observations you can complete below.

97. 1 point each: See how many birds you can identify while out in the parks during the fall season. Give yourself one point for each species you can correctly identify visually or by its song. Each bird species is counted only once per season.

Species: _____

_____ :Total points for fall birding

98. 3 points: Warblers often join mixed-species flocks – especially during fall migration. In the fall, the best way to find these mixed-species flocks is to find a group of vocal chickadees. Find a mixed species flock in the parks and record the member species. What makes chickadees particularly valuable members of a mixed species flock?

Flock Composition: _____

Answer: _____

Date: _____

99. 2 points per bird: Fall is the best season to observe hawks. Visit one of the parks’ overlooks in the late morning and record the species of hawks, vultures, eagles, and falcons you observe.

Species: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

100. 2 points: Some birds such as jays, woodpeckers, and nuthatches begin caching food like seeds or nuts during autumn, hiding it to use in the winter months when food is scarce. What ecological service does caching behavior provide?

Answer: _____



_____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Critters Preppin'

Winter is a time where it seems everything has quieted down as many animals hibernate. However, beyond hibernation, many species have remarkable adaptations that allow them to endure the cold, creating a beautiful example of resilience and life even in the harshest months. Complete the activities below during the fall season to learn more about the animals in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.

_____ **101. 3 points:** Orb weaver spiders often reach maturity in fall, with large webs visible along trails and open areas. During fall, orb weaver spiders are at their largest and most active. When visiting the parks, observe any orb weavers spinning or repairing their webs. What was their web's size, and did you notice any prey caught in the silk?

Observation: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

_____ **102. 3 points:** As fall approaches, eastern gray squirrels become busy foragers, gathering and storing food for winter. When visiting the parks, observe a gray squirrel collecting food. What types of food items were you able to observe them collecting? How do their food storage habits affect the forest ecosystem?

Observation: _____

Location: _____ Date: _____

_____ **103. 3 points:** The Big South Fork currently has 43 documented species of mussels, five of which are federally listed as endangered (Cumberland elktoe, Cumberlandian combshell, tan riffle shell, little-wing pearly mussel, and Cumberland bean pearly mussel). Climate change could increase temperature extremes and droughts, threatening mussel habitats. Big South Fork was originally intended to be dammed, but congress established it as a National River, in part to protect the dozens of mussel species that call the river home. What are two ways that a dam would have negatively impacted our mussel populations?

Answer: _____

_____ **104. 2 points:** River otters are highly active in the fall, hunting for fish and other aquatic prey. There was a time where Big South Fork did not have any river otters. How and when did river otters return to Big South Fork?

Answer: _____

_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Kaleidoscope of Color

Fall is when the leaves change color, and the weather begins to cool down. It's a perfect time to sit outside and take in the stunning hues of red, orange, and yellow that transform the landscape. Complete the activities below during the fall season to learn more about plants in the parks. Stumped on a question? Visit or call the Bandy Creek Visitor Center at 423-286-7275.



____ **105. 3 points:** Autumn is when the leaves begin to change colors. Get out in the parks and locate a tree or group of trees and describe the colors.

Description: _____

Date: _____

____ **106. 3 points:** Goldenrod (*Solidago*) blooms in the fall and can be found anywhere from along the river to an open field. Find a patch of goldenrod in the parks, take a picture, and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.

____ **107. 3 points:** Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) is one of many species of invasive plants that are treated within the parks. Despite its name, autumn olive blooms in the spring. However, along with the rest of the woods, its leaves change colors in the fall. Throughout the spring and summer, autumn olive can be easily identified via its silvery leaves. Find an autumn olive tree in the parks and describe the color change in its leaves.

Description: _____

Date: _____

____ **108. 2 points:** Acorns begin to fall in autumn, providing a large food source for the surrounding wildlife. What trees in the parks produce these acorns?

Answer: _____

____: **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

Fall into Place

You can explore places in the parks in the comfort of your own home! Go to the parks' websites at www.nps.gov/biso, www.nps.gov/obed, and www.nps.gov/mapr/oak-ridge and select 'Learn About the Park' to find the answers.

_____ **109. ♿ 2 points:** A rugged former community of Big South Fork, known as No Business, was established in 1796. This remote area had a population of roughly 300 individuals who were connected to other settlements in the area by churches, general stores, and one room schoolhouses. This community reached its peak in the last half of the 1800s, then started to decline in population, as did many of the other communities in the area. In 1960, the last resident of No Business left the community. Who was the first permanent settler in No Business and the last person to leave the community?

Answer: _____

_____ **110. ♿ 2 points:** A common fixture on many rivers were gristmills. One such mill was the Lilly Gristmill, located on the northern bank of Clear Creek. First built by Woodson Hawn near present day Lilly Bridge. After Woodson Hawn, Alva and Elvia Howard took over mill production and ground the corn into meal for the locals in the area. For payment, they received a portion of their customer's cornmeal. A flood eventually destroyed the gristmill, and it was never rebuilt. Approximately what year was the gristmill destroyed by a flood?

Answer: _____

_____ **111. ♿ 2 points:** One of the few remaining structures from pre-Manhattan Project Oak Ridge is the New Bethel Baptist Church. Located inside in the Oak Ridge National Laboratory (ORNL), it was part of the Scarboro community at that time. Originally, there were plans to take down the building, but Manhattan Project administrators decided to designate the church as a meeting room for scientists. It played an important role in post WWII research in nuclear physics. Even though the public access is not available to visitors, it does host periodic reunions for former residents and special events.

When was this structure originally built?

Answer: _____



_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**



Fall Season: September 22-December 31

"Fall"ow Safety Protocols

Knowing how to be safe while recreating in the parks will keep you from "fall"ing into hazards. If you or someone in your group is injured or ill while visiting the parks or you see something suspicious or unsafe, call 911 or speak with park staff. To answer the following questions, check out the "Safety" tab on the parks' websites or follow us on social media and look for the posts with "#SafetySaturday."

_____ **112. 2 points:** Fall is a great time to backpack in the parks. While the many creeks or rivers in the parks may look clean, they may contain harmful parasites. Plan to filter your water. List one method of filtering or purifying water below.

Answer: _____

_____ **113. 2 Points:** Take a photo of you hydrating in your favorite park location and email it to biso_challenge@nps.gov.



_____ : **TOTAL POINTS EARNED**

SOCIAL MEDIA CHALLENGE

During the GO BIG 2025 Challenge we will be having #TriviaTuesday on the first Tuesday of every month on Facebook. These questions will not be found in the challenge book but will be different and unique in nature. To participate, record the posted questions below, the date it was posted, and the correct answer to receive your points! Questions could be web based or require the participant to venture outside and into one of the three parks to find the answers.

DATE	QUESTION	ANSWER	POINTS

_____ : TOTAL POINTS EARNED

GO BIG CHALLENGE ACTIVITY LOG SHEET

**Big South Fork National River and Recreation Area
National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior**

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GO BIG 2025 CHALLENGE POINT LOG

Add up the points on each page of this booklet and log them onto the corresponding lines below.

Total Points Per Page						
Page 4			Page 15		Page 26	
Page 5			Page 16		Page 27	
Page 6			Page 17		Page 28	
Page 7			Page 18		Page 29	
Page 8			Page 19		Page 30	
Page 9			Page 20		Page 31	
Page 10			Page 21		Page 32	
Page 11			Page 22		Page 33	
Page 12			Page 23		Page 34	
Page 13			Page 24			
Page 14			Page 25			

GRAND TOTAL: _____

For award purposes we need you to select your age category:

Under 18 y/o ☐

Adult ☐

Those who wish to be considered for an award must have their booklets turned in to the Bandy Creek Visitor Center no later than December 1, 2025. There will be a "GO BIG Celebration" on December 6, 2025 at Bandy Creek Visitor Center for everyone who participated. Those present will be considered for an award in various categories, however, employees and their families are not eligible to compete.

AWARD CATEGORIES

- Most Hiking Miles
- Most Biking Miles
- Most Equestrian Miles
- Most Volunteer Points
- Youth Award: Most Overall Points
- Most Overall Points: First and Second Place

Each participant can only qualify as a winner in one category.



This certificate is proudly presented to

Please Print Name

for completing the

Big South Fork National River & Recreation Area GO BIG 2025 CHALLENGE

Dated this _____ day of _____

Park Ranger Signature