



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Harpers Ferry National
Historical Park

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Harpers Ferry NHP News Release

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Harpers Ferry Park Hosts National Trails Day

Lace up your hiking boots or just put on a comfortable pair of sneakers and head to Harpers Ferry National Historical Park on Saturday, June 7, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. for *National Trails Day*. Harpers Ferry Park has over 18 miles of hiking trails that include mountains, gently rolling fields and flat walking—trails for everyone. Join one of our guided hikes or explore on your own. Stop in at our Trails Day Tents in the lower town at the park Green to find out more about our event partners—Appalachian Trail Conservancy (ATC), Potomac Appalachian Trail Conservancy (PATC), The American Chestnut Foundation (TACF) & Harpers Ferry Historic Town Foundation. Visitors are invited to contrast and compare items in a civil war soldier's pack versus a modern hiker's pack, the latest in modern hiking equipment and lightweight food stuffs. Take in a guided hike and enjoy the breathtaking vistas! Guided hikes are appropriate for families and are rated easy to strenuous.

Harpers Ferry is located at the junction of two very popular mid-Atlantic hiking trails--the C&O Canal towpath, which extends 184 miles from Washington, D.C. to Cumberland, Maryland, and the Appalachian Trail, which runs 2100 miles from Georgia to Maine. Both trails are included in several of the guided hikes. If you choose to hike on your own, there are dozens of opportunities for self-guided hikes on the C&O Canal towpath, the Appalachian Trail, and several other "blue-blazed" trails that originate in Harpers Ferry or pass nearby.

If you plan to join one of our hikes, please come prepared with water, insect repellent, sunscreen, and comfortable shoes.

At 1:00 p.m. slide presentation by an American Chestnut restoration biologist will be presented in John Brown Museum Allies for Freedom exhibit. The program will include historic photos of American chestnut trees, the historic role of these once-giant trees, and current efforts to restore them to the Appalachian forest.

At 2:30 p.m. Celebration of Chestnut Foundation's 25th Anniversary and A.T. Mega-Transect Partnership at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy's Visitor and Information Center at 799 Washington Street. Park visitors are invited to join representatives from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy, The American Chestnut Foundation, Potomac Appalachian Trail Club and National Park Service in this ceremony followed by light refreshments.

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EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA™

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.

Guided Hikes:**10:00-12:00 Loudoun Heights Hike—Rating: strenuous. 2.5 miles Meet at the Park Green.**

This short but strenuous hike begins with an introduction to chestnut tree identification in the National Park, crosses the Shenandoah River, and ascends the Appalachian Trail to a couple of trail side chestnut trees. Learn to recognize the remaining American chestnut trees that can be found along the trail. This hike will be led by volunteers from the The American Chestnut Foundation and Appalachian Trail volunteers.

11:00-12:00 Virginius Island Walk—Rating: easy. Distance .9 miles. Meet on the Park Green.

Archeological evidence of our park industrial and transportation story can be found along the trail. Here lie the ruins of a bygone industrial center--Hall's and Virginius Island. This area was developed during the first half of the 19th century through railroad and river canals. You see the remains of obsolete, water-powered industries.

12:00-1:30 Murphy Farm Walk--Rating: moderate. 1.3 miles round trip. Meet at the Cavalier Heights Visitor Center.

This trail takes you through the gently rolling fields of the Murphy Farm. This landscape, remarkably unchanged over the past two hundred years, bears silent witness to the hopes, dreams, fears and struggles of previous generations. This singular plot of land is home, farm, battlefield and shrine—a place echoing with stories from the past.

1:00-4:30 Maryland Heights Hike—Rating: strenuous. 4.5 miles round trip. Meet on the Park Green

Stop along the way at the Civil War Naval Battery, and at the rocky overlook, a favorite view of the town of Harpers Ferry. Experience breathtaking views of the confluence of 2 rivers, 3 states and countless crossroads in history. This hike will be led by volunteers from the Potomac Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

2:00-2:30 Jefferson Rock/ATC Visitor and Information Center Hike 1 mile.--Rating: moderate to strenuous.

Meet at the Park Green Take in the view that caused our 3rd President, Thomas Jefferson, to note, *the view is worth a voyage across the Atlantic*. This hike will be led by volunteers from the Appalachian Trail Conservancy.

3:00-4:30 Bolivar Heights Walk—Rating: easy to moderate. 1.6 miles round trip. Meet at Cavalier Heights Visitor Center for a shuttle ride to the Bolivar Heights Battlefield

During the Confederacy's first invasion of the North, on September 15, 1862, Maj. Gen. Thomas J. "Stonewall" Jackson surrounded and captured the 12,500-man Union garrison stationed here. The Confederate campaign failed and presented Abraham Lincoln with the opportunity to issue the Emancipation Proclamation.

4:00-6:00 Loudoun Heights Hike—Rating: strenuous. Meet at the Appalachian Trail Conservancy Office.

This short but strenuous hike begins with an introduction to chestnut tree identification in the National Park, crosses the Shenandoah River, and ascends the Appalachian Trail to a couple of trail side chestnut trees. Learn to recognize the remaining American chestnut trees that can be found along the trail. This hike will be led by volunteers from the The American Chestnut Foundation and Appalachian Trail volunteers.