

A Guide to Hiking the East Lakeshore Trail



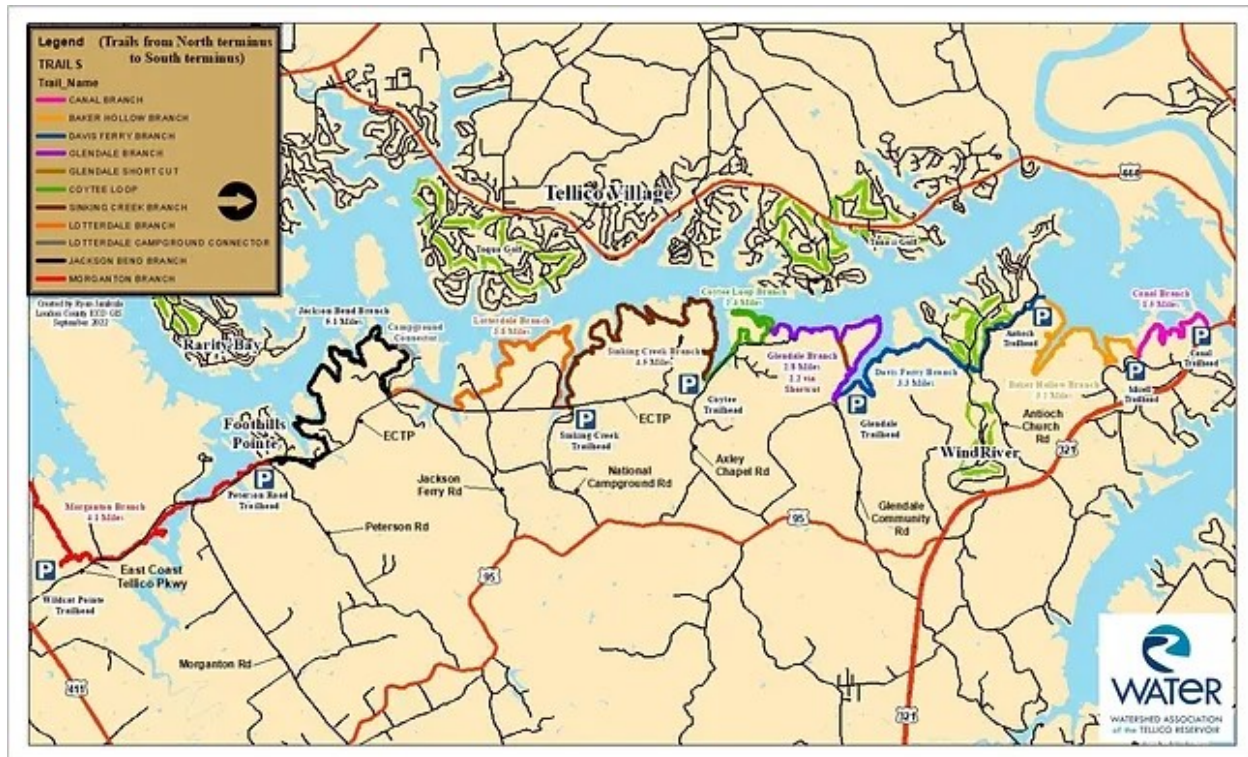
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Watershed Association of the Tellico Reservoir
(WATeR)

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Introduction to Hiking on the East Lakeshore Trail

The East Lakeshore Trail is a 31-mile long National Recreation Trail on TVA land along the east bank of Tellico Reservoir. Tellico Reservoir itself was formed when the Tellico Dam on the Little Tennessee River was completed in 1979.



How the Trail was Built

Planning for a hiking trail system along the eastern side of Tellico Reservoir began in March 2003 as a collaborative agreement between TVA and the Watershed Association of Tellico Reservoir (WATER) to provide public recreational opportunities on TVA property. Construction of the East Lakeshore Trail started on what is now the Coytee Loop Branch, across Tellico Reservoir from the historic Bowman house (built in 1828) on Tanasi Court in Tellico Village. The Coytee Loop Branch of the trail was opened to the public on October 22, 2004. Trail building continued northward along the lake to Powerline Point and then east into Powerline Cove (the current Glendale Branch). It took 5-6 trail builders three years to complete the Glendale section of trail, working one day each month. Trail construction and the number of trail builders increased after 2006. Although trail work was done concurrently on some trail branches, the order of completion of the 9 trail branches was: Coytee Loop, Glendale, Sinking Creek, Davis Ferry, Lotterdale, Jackson Bend, Morganton, Baker Hollow, and Canal. More than 100 volunteers worked at least once to build or maintain the trail, under the direction of Trails Committee Chairs Jerry Barr (2003-2006), Bob Martin (2006-2015), Mel Fisher (2015-2018),

George Zola (2019-2020), and Steve West (2020-2021). The last section of the 31-mile trail – the Wildcat Ridge spur trail – was finished in 2016. Distances for mile markers on the trail were determined by volunteers using a DuraWheel distance measuring tool. Volunteer trail builders came from several local communities, and TVA representative Darrell Cuthbertson provided oversight, technical support, and heavy construction equipment needed for some of the bridges and to clear a path for the trail on some steep or rocky sections. Parking lots at the nine trailheads were provided by TVA. Funding of trail building was provided by TVA and by grants from the Tennessee Trails Association, the Tennessee Parks and Greenways Foundation, the American Hiking Society National Trails Fund, and Kiwanis International and other local service groups. The trail was recognized on May 30, 2012, as a National Recreation Trail when Bob Martin’s application was approved by the U.S. Department of the Interior. TVA and TRDA continue to provide financial and technical support, and WATeR volunteers in the Adopt-a-Trail group maintain the trail throughout the year, and clear downed trees, brush, and vines.



Trail Information and Safety

What to Carry on a Hike – The hiker should carry water, medications as needed, and a cell phone for communication. Proper and comfortable shoes should be worn to protect the feet from hard or slippery surfaces, and from wet and muddy areas of the trail; shoes that are worn when walking along the street in the hiker’s local community are suitable for the trail. A hat may be useful both to protect from the sun and to reduce the number of spider webs in one’s face. Hiking sticks or poles may be useful for stability in rocky and steep trail sections. In the late fall when many leaves are covering the trail, more caution is needed to avoid rocks and tree roots, and to stay on the trail; hiking poles are helpful then.

Trail Elevations – The minimum elevation of the East Lakeshore Trail is the level at which Tellico Reservoir is at “full pool” in the months from April through October, and that is 813 feet above sea level. The maximum elevations on the trail are 1,000 to 1,100 feet, and these are at the beginning and middle of the Wildcat Ridge spur trail (about 1,020 -- 1,045 feet) of the Morganton Branch, the high bluff in the Red Knobs across from Rarity Bay at miles 22.5-23 on the Jackson Bend Branch (about 1,000 feet), and on the Sinking Creek Branch at about mile 13.5 (1,015 feet).

Trail Signs – A WATeR kiosk at each trailhead parking lot has a trail map and information for the hiker (QR codes for scanning will soon be present at each kiosk, to get trail information). White blazes on the sides of trees are used as guides along the trail. At trail intersections, double white blazes and metal signs are used to alert the hiker to a potential change in trail direction. Mile markers are present at the top of vertical wood posts along the trail to help hikers identify their location on the trail; these posts are generally found on the uphill side of the trail.

Trail Surfaces – The common trail surface is a dirt path. Other common trail surfaces include mixed gravel (especially in wetter areas) and wood (bridges, steps, stairs, and water bars). Bridges are often covered with a metal non-skid grating. Rocks and tree roots are common on the trail, especially on slopes where erosion of the soil is significant. Pine needles are present on the trail in areas of pine woods. Oak tree leaves fall and cover the trail late in the year. These leaves may be slippery to walk on and may make the trail difficult to follow.

Fence Stiles – Privately-owned and TVA land leased for cattle farms may have cattle fences that cross some parts of the East Lakeshore Trail. These are permitted by TVA. Fence stiles have been installed for hikers to climb over the cattle farm fences that cross the trail. The Lotterdale and Sinking Creek Branches have more fence stiles than other branches of the trail.

What you might see on the trail

Geology – The East Lakeshore Trail lies in the Valley and Ridge section of Tennessee. Cambrian and Ordovician age limestone and dolomite of the Knox Group strata are present here. Weathering of the Knox Group rock produces the reddish-orange soil seen locally. Chemical erosion of limestone has led to formation of sinkholes, caves, and springs throughout this area. The trail does not cross any sinkholes, but they have been seen within sight distance of the trail (e.g., at the north end of the Davis Ferry Branch, and on the Glendale Branch about mile 9.4). Blankenship cave is on private property close to the East Lakeshore Trail. Coytee and Mizell springs at the bottom of bluffs overlooking the Little Tennessee River are now under the waters of Tellico Lake.

Forest Succession, Age, and Environments – Forest succession is the process where an open sunny area becomes a mature, old growth forest over a long period of time. The first trees to become established in a newly cleared area are the “pioneer species” that need full sun and grow relatively fast. Tulip (yellow) poplar, walnut, and sycamore are typical pioneer, early succession trees in East Tennessee. Eastern red cedar is also a pioneer tree, especially on former farm pastureland in areas of calcium-rich clay soils on bluffs and rock outcrops. Trees that can grow in the shade will eventually “shade out” the seedlings of the pioneer sun-loving species, to create a mature “climax” forest. American beech, white oak, and sugar maple are common climax forest trees in East Tennessee.

Along the East Lakeshore Trail, the hiker can note the difference between young and mature forest. Young forest is present on land that was previously farmed but recently allowed to regrow. All trees at these sites are about the same age. In contrast, on many of the steep and rocky slopes where farming was not practical, there are trees of many ages in a mature forest of tall white oak and hickory trees with a rich understory that includes dogwood, pawpaw, and blackgum trees, along with many shrubs. The Baker Hollow Branch close to the Mizell parking lot, as well as along the steep south side of Mizell Cove at about mile 2.6, are good examples of mature hardwood forest. Mature forest can also be seen on the Lotterdale Branch between miles 17 and 18, and along the Wildcat Ridge and spur trail.

Dry areas alongside the trail will often have a combination of pines, oak, and hickory trees, whereas low and wetter areas will have tupelo, sycamore, swamp chestnut oak, box elder, sweetgum and red maple trees. Soil pH (acidity) also determines what trees and plants will grow along the trail. When limestone is close to the surface, the soil is neutral to alkaline, and eastern red cedar and redbud trees grow readily in this environment. On the other hand, blueberries, pine trees, sourwood, and red maple prefer acidic soils.

Birds and Animals – Many different birds may be seen when hiking on the East Lakeshore Trail. Binoculars, a bird field guide (see item 10 in Recommended Reading), and an iPhone birding App (e.g., Merlin, iBird) are recommended to assist with bird identification using visual or auditory cues. Woodland birds rarely seen in areas of developed housing or at bird feeders (e.g., scarlet and summer tanagers, and various warblers) may be seen along the trail. Because the trail is usually close to water, ducks and other water birds are also commonly seen.

Animals commonly seen on the trail include raccoon, squirrels, rabbit, skunks, opossum, red fox, and deer. Less commonly seen are coyote, beaver, and muskrat. Dog walkers are advised to keep their dogs on a leash. Bears have not been reported on the trail but are likely to be present along in East Tennessee.

Reptiles and Amphibians – Reptiles (snakes, lizards, turtles) and amphibians (salamanders, frogs, toads) may be seen when hiking the East Lakeshore Trail. Snakes are certainly present but appear to do their best to get off the trail when people are around. Among poisonous snakes, only the copperhead is likely to be found on the East Lakeshore Trail. Lizards that are likely to be seen include the common five-lined skink and the eastern fence lizard. Box turtles may be seen on the trail, and water turtles (e.g., Northern Map Turtle, Pond Slider) are often seen basking on tree trunks close to and in the water along the shoreline of the lake. Frogs and toads may be heard calling in spring and summer from wet areas along the trail (e.g., the pond at mile 24.9 of the Jackson Bend Branch). Salamanders are rarely seen on the trail but are present under logs, rocks, and leaf cover in moist and wet areas next to the trail.

Interesting Insects and Millipedes – Many butterflies are likely to be seen when hiking on the East Lakeshore Trail, especially in the sunnier sections. Pipevine, spicebush, tiger, black, and zebra swallowtails are all rather large butterflies that can be seen all summer looking for nectar in flowers or laying eggs on plants that will be food for their growing caterpillars. An excellent guide to the many butterflies that may be seen on the trail is *Butterflies of Tennessee*, by author Rita Venable (Maywood Publishing, 2014). One millipede that is likely to be seen crawling slowly across the ground on many wooded trail sections is the black and gold flat millipede, *Apheloria virginensis*. It is about 2" long, and each segment is black with bright yellow edges. When handled it can secrete a cyanide-like substance, which protects it from small mammals, so if you pick this millipede up, you will want to wash your hands soon afterward, and avoid touching your eyes. The millipede consumes dead and decomposing leaf litter and is commonly seen along the Jackson Bend branch of the trail.

Stinging and Biting Insects – Wasps, hornets, yellow jackets, and bees may be encountered when hiking the East Lakeshore Trail. The hiker is reminded to keep watch for these, and to carry medication if needed to counteract the effects of, or allergies to, insect stings. Ticks are common in Tennessee in the warmer months. Contact of a hiker’s clothing with plants along the trail is a common way to acquire ticks. Lone star ticks (females have a white dot on their backside) appear to be the most common type of tick encountered on the trail. The hiker is advised to check for ticks on the body, and on his/her clothing, soon after returning from a hike. Ticks always climb up, but not down, the clothing and body. Chiggers are small biting insects and chigger bites can cause days of itching. Chiggers are found in low grasses such as non-native Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium*), which is common in moist areas along the trail. The hiker is advised to avoid walking through moist areas with these grasses whenever possible.

Spiders – On warm and humid summer mornings spider webs may cross the trail, especially where there are many shrubs and trees at trailside to provide shade and “cover” during the day. Most of the webs are made by “orb-weaving” spiders. The most common of these on the East Lakeshore Trail is the triangulate orb weaver. This small spider is named for the easily seen white or yellow triangle that covers the back of the abdomen of the spider. This spider is not a threat to humans.

In open areas such as TVA powerline cuts, flowering plants grow tall quickly during the summer months. Many spiders are present in these areas in the summer and fall, including jumping spiders (Family Salticidae), wolf spiders that hunt on the ground (Family Lycosidae), and larger orb weaving spiders (Family Araneidae) such as the yellow garden spider.

Although all spiders have poison glands, in Tennessee only the Southern Black Widow and the Brown Recluse are extremely toxic to humans. Neither of these spiders is likely to be encountered while hiking on the East Lakeshore Trail, as both are most often found in or around human-built structures and woodpiles.

Poisonous Plants – Poison ivy is commonly seen in all branches of the East Lakeshore Trail. The hiker is strongly encouraged to learn to identify this plant. Poison ivy has compound leaves with 3 leaflets (“leaves of three”), unlike the common Virginia creeper that has compound leaves with 5 leaflets. Unfortunately, many other plants in East Tennessee also have “leaves of three”, including the relatively common boxelder tree that looks like poison ivy when it is small, and the invasive kudzu vine. Poison ivy is often found growing up the trunks of trees and through shrubs, or on the ground along the trail. Poison ivy vines that grow up trees have many hairy roots along the vine, unlike either kudzu or Virginia creeper that do not have “aerial roots”. Although some people are not allergic to poison ivy, most people are. If the hiker touches poison ivy, he/she is advised to wash hands as soon as possible, and to never use a hand that has touched poison ivy to touch any other body part until the hand is cleaned in soapy water. Taking a shower soon after hiking on the trail is a good way to reduce the chance of getting a skin rash from poison ivy.

Ragweed is found in some sunny sections of the trail. Those with an allergy (“hay fever”) to ragweed pollen may wish to avoid hiking when ragweed is blooming in the summer months.

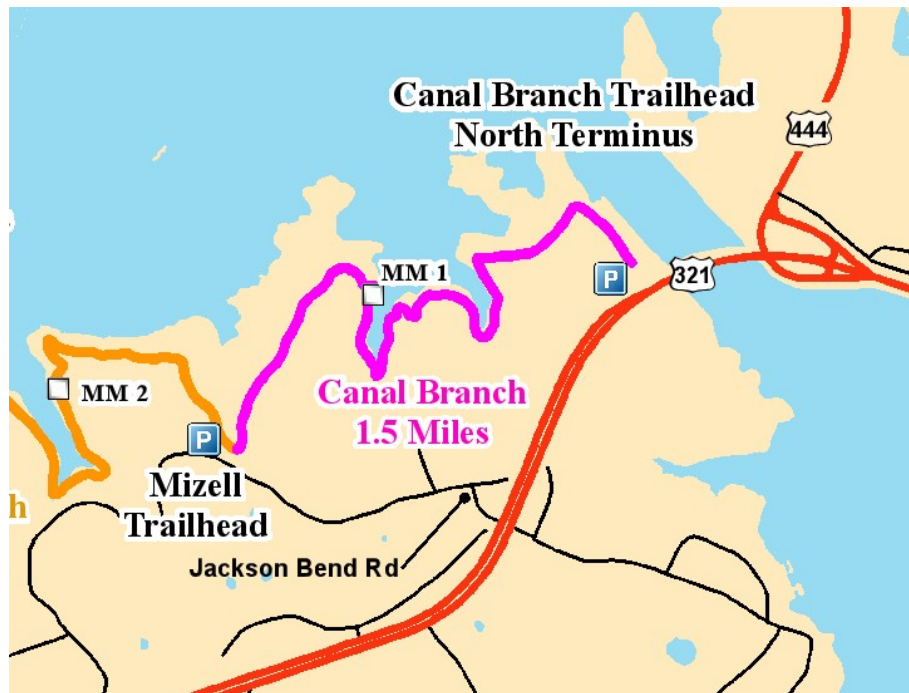
Invasive Non-native Plants – Many invasive non-native plants are present on land next to the trail. Chinese privet (*Ligustrum sinensis*), autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*), “heavenly bamboo” (*Nandina domestica*), kudzu vine (*Pueraria montana*), mimosa tree (*Albizia julibrissin*), multiflora rose (*Rosa multiflora*), and Japanese honeysuckle (*Lonicera japonica*) are examples of non-native invasive plants that can be seen growing alongside the East Lakeshore Trail. Large autumn olive shrubs are common along the trail, and have colorful, edible fall berries. Leaves of autumn olive are darker colored on the top side than underneath, and both fruit and leaves have many tiny silver dots. However, autumn olive and other non-native plants are not used by local insects (such as caterpillars) as food, and insects are the major food needed by growing birds. Because non-native plants take over space that could be used by native plants that do sustain the local insects that birds feed upon, they should be removed where possible. More information on invasive plants in Tennessee can be found on the website of the Tennessee Invasive Plant Council. English ivy (*Hedera helix*), periwinkle (*Vinca minor*), mimosa, privet, multiflora rose, and heavenly bamboo are non-native plants that are commonly grown around houses for their flowers, hedge rows, or evergreen leaves. The presence of these plants in open woodlands may therefore indicate sites where homes existed in the past. The native Southern Magnolia tree is another potential indicator of a former home site.

Maintenance of the East Lakeshore Trail

Maintenance of the trail is performed throughout the year by volunteers in the Adopt-a-Trail group who “adopt” a Branch of the trail to keep weeded, free of fallen trees, branches, vines, and trash. In addition, a trail work crew meets monthly to repair bridges, stairs, steps, and damaged areas of the trail. Trunks and branches of trees that fall across the trail are cut and removed on an “as needed” basis after they are reported by hikers. Hikers can assist with trail maintenance by picking up trash and reporting needed maintenance of the trail on the WATeR website under “Trails”. Volunteers are welcome – sign up at www.tellicowater.org.

Trail Maps – A map of the East Lakeshore Trail is available from the WATeR website tellicowater.org, as well as from the Tellico Village Welcome Center. These maps were prepared by Ryan Janikula, Manager of the Geographic Information System (GIS) for Loudon County, TN, with help from WATeR volunteers.

The Canal Branch



Trail Parking

- 1) The Canal Branch Trailhead and kiosk are in a parking lot close to the canal connecting Tellico Reservoir with Fort Loudoun Reservoir. The parking lot is at the end of a small gravel road that is reached from Route 321 northbound toward Maryville, soon after crossing the bridge over the canal.
- 2) The Mizell Trailhead parking lot off Jackson Bend Road. From the parking lot the trail goes downhill a short distance to meet the southern end of the Canal Branch trail.

Trail Highlights

- 1) At mile 1.1, the trail passes through an overstory of large pine trees, and the path may be covered with pine needles.
- 2) The trail passes a former home site with a very large southern Magnolia tree that blooms in the early summer.
- 3) Several TVA power line cuts that have tall wildflowers blooming in the fall, and violets, pipsissewa, spotted wintergreen, and little brown jug can be seen in the woods in the spring.

Degree of Difficulty

The trail is relatively flat and easy to hike.

Local History

The area the Canal Branch trail passes through was formerly Cherokee land that was acquired by James Bussell in 1826. At that time the land was a peninsula whose boundaries were the Tennessee River on the north and east, and the Little Tennessee River on the west. Lenoir City was located across the Tennessee River, north of the peninsula, and was reached by ferry. On the peninsula, a small trade center and farming community named Busselltown was established. Construction of the Fort Loudoun Dam in 1943 resulted in partial flooding of Busselltown, and farmland on the west side of Busselltown was flooded when the Tellico Dam closed its gates in 1979. The South Holston Church, located above the retaining wall at the entrance of Jackson Bend Road from Route 321, served Busselltown.

Trail Description

The Canal Branch is named after the 1000-ft. long canal that connects Tellico Reservoir with Fort Loudoun Reservoir. The canal was constructed in 1980 to direct the water from the Little Tennessee River into Fort Loudoun Reservoir, and to allow barge traffic between the two reservoirs without the need for a boat lock.

The trail starts at a yellow car barrier next to the gravel parking lot and trailhead kiosk, and proceeds on a wide, flat gravel path along the canal. There is no overstory of trees, so it may be hot here in the summer. The trail passes through a series of TVA power line cuts with no trees, but many tall wildflowers (e.g., goldenrod, frostweed, cup plant, thistles, and ragweed) and shrubs that bloom in the summer and fall. Watch for a directional sign with a double blaze, where the trail turns to the right. Between the power line cuts, the trail passes through wooded areas on a bluff above and close to a small cove; they provide some shade and variety. Along the north side of the next cove, after crossing a bridge, look for a large southern Magnolia tree. This tree has fragrant white blossoms in the early summer and was formerly the site of a home close to Busselltown. The hiker then crosses a footbridge over a small creek bed, and proceeds along the south side of the cove and past mile marker #1. Here there are pine and mixed hardwood trees overhead, with Chinese privet, stiltgrass, and Christmas fern along the trailside. In the early summer, the hiker may see Turk's cap lily, elderberry, and swamp rose blooming along the trail in wet areas and/or next to the two bridges just passed. Going uphill, an understory of small hickory, oak and maple saplings is present on both sides of the trail, and an impressive overstory of large pine trees covers the trail with a cushion of pine needles. The trail then goes downhill past a directional sign and the ground becomes wet. The hiker walks over a series of logs placed on the ground to form a short "corduroy bridge" to drier land. The trail goes uphill and flattens out, passing through a pine overstory. Uphill on the left side of the trail a few homes can be seen. The trail continues uphill through woodland to the Mizell Trailhead kiosk. A right turn takes the hiker to Mizell Bluff, whereas going uphill past the kiosk leads to the Mizell Parking lot. Crane fly orchid plants (which are small) have been seen along the trail to the parking lot.

The Baker Hollow Branch



Trail Parking

The north end of the Baker Hollow Branch begins just downhill of the parking lot for the Mizell Bluff Trailhead, off Jackson Bend Road. The southern end of the branch ends at a TRDA parking lot (and picnic site, with bathrooms), at the end of Antioch Church Road West.

Trail Highlights

The Mizell Bluff overlook is a “don’t miss” for its scenic views and natural beauty. From the Mizell trailhead parking lot to Mizell Bluff, the trail passes through a mature oak forest, and large and colorful acorns may cover the trail in the fall. At the entrance to Baker Hollow cove is a lakeside bench for resting and a view of the Wind River boat dock. There are good views of the narrow Baker Hollow cove, and possibilities of seeing ospreys and wood ducks (see “Local History” below).

Degree of Difficulty

The Baker Hollow Branch is moderately strenuous to hike, with many short uphill and downhill sections, and some narrow and rocky areas of trail.

Local History

The Baker Hollow Branch of the ELT begins downhill from the Mizell parking lot for Mizell Bluff. Mizell Bluff is named after Henry Calvin Mizell, who owned the land in the 1900s. Before the closure of Tellico Dam, Mizell Bluff was next to the Little Tennessee River, and overlooked the river, farmland, and Hall Bend. There was a cave at the bottom of the south end of the bluff, and a spring (Mizell spring) at the bottom of the bluff south of Mizell cove, close to ELT mile 2.8, where a scenic view bench has been placed. The cave, spring, and farmland are now below the water of Tellico Reservoir, but Mizell Bluff is still a popular meeting spot for young and old alike, due to its beauty and scenic views.

Jackson Bend Road is named after Jackson Bend, a curve (or bend) in the Little Tennessee River at mile 3. The name Jackson was used to commemorate President Andrew Jackson from Tennessee.

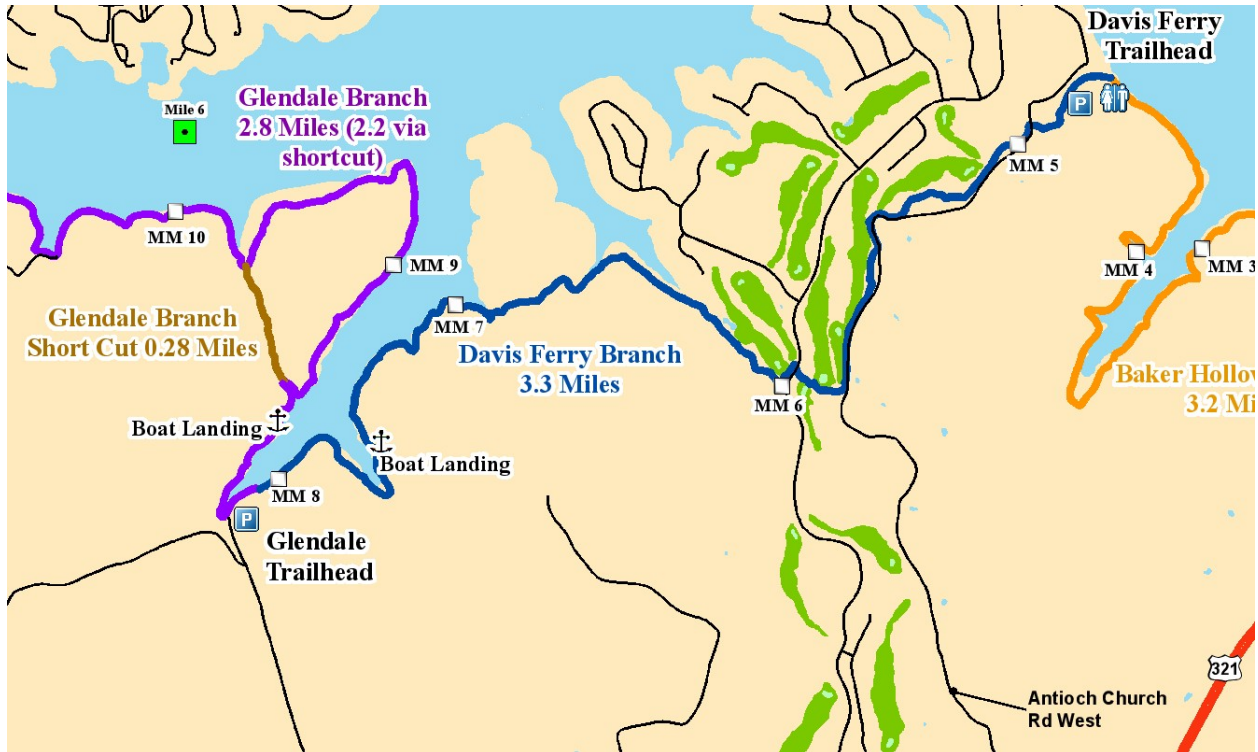
In the TVA Tellico Reservoir Land Management Plan of June 2000, Baker Hollow (named after the Hugh Baker family) is described as a 95-acre Sensitive Resources Management (Zone 3) parcel, as follows: "This tract of land is partially covered with a mixture of pine and hardwood forests, in addition to a small wetland in the inland point of the cove. This mixture of forest cover provides a year-round visual and noise buffer for people on both sides of the shoreline and should be maintained in such a way that these qualities are kept intact. During the data collecting stage of this plan, several adult ospreys and sharp-shinned hawks were observed in the area. This cove provides an important foraging site for osprey, and the adjacent woods provide nesting and foraging habitat for the sharp-shinned hawk. Additionally, many of the shallow coves along Baker Hollow are used as foraging areas for breeding wood ducks. Because of the species of birds, wetland, and other remarkable characteristics found in this cove, this parcel is placed in **Zone 3** to provide the protection it requires."

Trail Description

From the Mizell parking lot off Jackson Bend Road, the trail goes downhill to the kiosk marking the beginning of the Baker Hollow section and the end of the Canal section. The trail for Baker Hollow turns left and goes uphill along a sloping hillside with many types of oak trees. Large yellow and brown acorns cover the trail in the fall months. The trail flattens, then goes downhill toward Mizell Bluff. There are views of the lake. The hiker is advised to take the short spur trail to Mizell Bluff, because this overlook has one of the best views of any site on the East Lakeshore Trail and is also a good picnic spot. From Mizell Bluff, the trail proceeds past a trail information sign and downhill along the north side of Mizell Cove. Mile marker 2 is passed. In the fall, native late purple asters are blooming. The trail goes around the end of Mizell Cove; uphill from the trail is Jackson Bend Road, and several homes on the road have paths leading to

the lake. Invasive autumn olive shrubs are fruiting here in the fall. After crossing a footbridge at the end of the cove, the hiker goes uphill along the south side of Mizell Cove and toward the lake. Blackgum trees growing here have red leaves in the fall, and smooth hydrangea bushes can be seen. The trail is benched into a relatively steep hillside bluff with rock outcrops. These steep rocky slopes were not suitable for farming, and thus the trees were not cut. Now the large oak and hickory trees shade an understory of sassafras, blackgum, pawpaw, and ferns. In other areas that were suitable for pasture crops, the trees have grown back more recently and are smaller in size. The trail goes up and downhill north of the entrance to Mizell cove, with views across the lake. Lakeside at mile 2.8 is a bench that offers a view of the WindRiver boat dock. The trail proceeds past the bench on a steep, well-drained hillside with reindeer moss. Mile marker 3 is passed on the north side of Baker Hollow Cove, and a small footbridge is crossed. The trail becomes wide and mostly flat, and because it receives direct sunlight from the south, it is pleasingly "bright". At the end of Baker Hollow Cove (mile 3.5) is a footbridge, and the ground is low and moist. The trail then proceeds along the south side of the cove. Because the south side of the cove receives little direct sun from the north, it is humid, and poison ivy, ferns, and mushrooms are commonly seen. The trail on the south side of Baker Hollow Cove has short up and down sections, and because the hillside is steep, erosion has resulted in the appearance of many exposed tree roots. At about mile 3.7 there is a flat area with a short trail spur that extends to the side of the cove. Mile marker 4 is passed and the trail goes down and around a small cove, then uphill to a flat section on a steep hillside above Baker Hollow, and toward the lake. At mile 4.37 near the lakeshore is a small bridge; from this site one can see Tellico dam in the winter months. The trail is now parallel to and above the lake on a steep slope with mature oaks and other trees, along with non-native privet and Amur honeysuckle, which has small red berries in the fall. At the end of the Baker Hollow branch is a set of four timber stairs leading down to a TRDA picnic area and kiosk, bathrooms, and the parking lot for the Antioch Trailhead.

The Davis Ferry Branch



Trail Parking

The north end of the Davis Ferry Branch begins at the Antioch Trailhead, at the end of Antioch Church Road West. At this site is a parking lot, restrooms with running water, picnic tables, and a kiosk. The trail begins past the kiosk and picnic tables, at steps that lead uphill and into the woods. The south end of the Davis Ferry Branch at its junction with the Glendale Branch is at the end of Glendale Community Road. A parking lot and kiosk are there.

Trail Highlights

The Davis Ferry Branch parallels Antioch Church Road for a mile, where it is at the edge of the WindRiver golf course. It goes across a part of the golf course on golf cart paths, then along a small stream in a ravine below the golf course. The trail passes through a mixed hardwood forest and proceeds along the east side of Powerline cove with good views across it. Just south of mile 7 is a scenic view bench facing Tellico Reservoir and toward the Tanasi golf course.

Degree of Difficulty

The Davis Ferry Branch is relatively easy hiking. There is one steep uphill and downhill section to and from a knoll at mile 6.8.

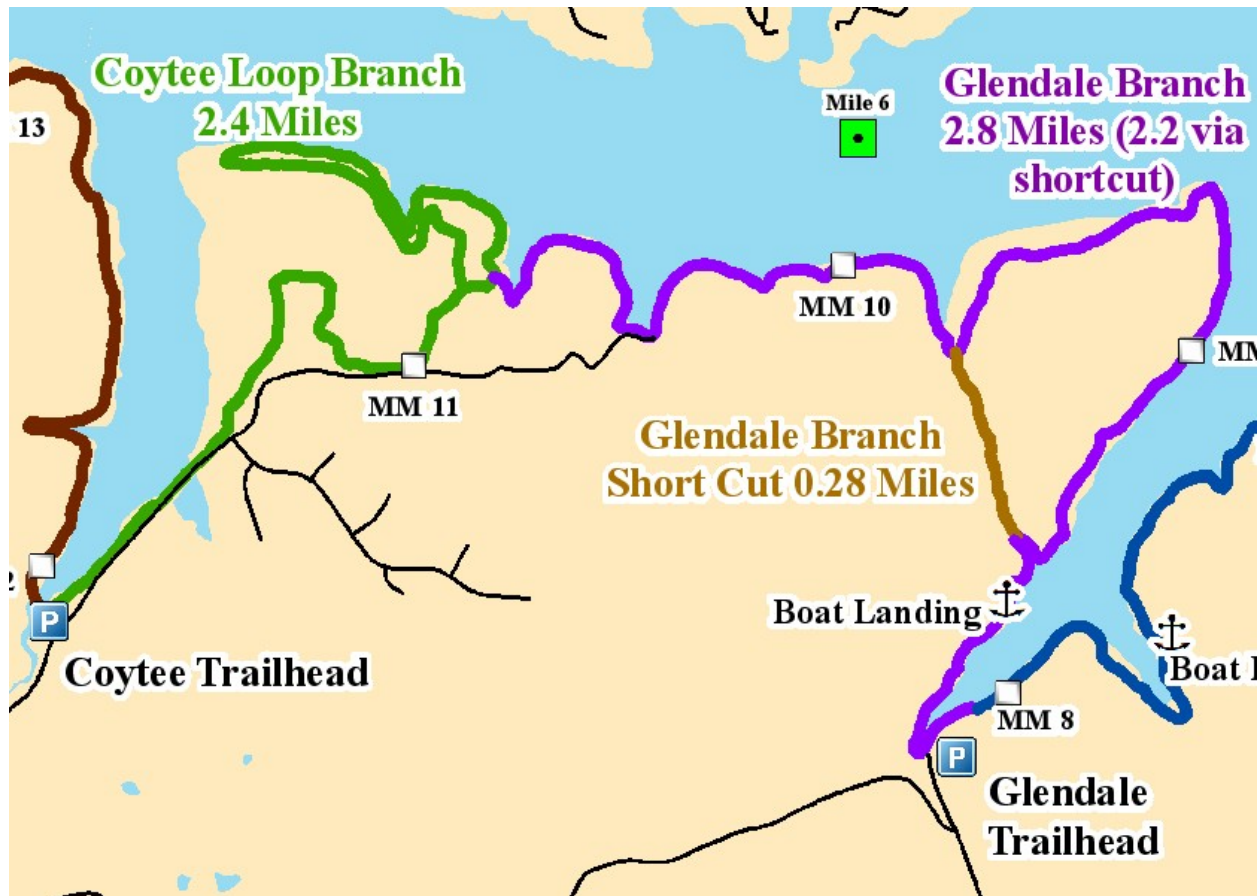
Local History

The Davis Ferry Branch is named after (no surprise) Davis Ferry. Davis was a small community on the west side of the Little Tennessee River before Tellico Dam was completed, and the location of a ferry that carried residents across the river, to commute between Loudon and Glendale on Davis Ferry Road. The Davis family purchased their land in 1782, and at one time owned 1,200 acres. Today the Davis home and land is under the water of Tellico Reservoir, and the western part of Davis Ferry Road ends at route 444. Davis Ferry Road east of the river is now at the bottom of the northwest side of Powerline Cove. The road from the end of the Glendale/Powerline Cove to Glendale has been renamed from Davis Ferry Road to Glendale Community Road.

Trail Description

From the Antioch Trailhead at mile 4.7, the trail goes uphill through a quarter-mile wooded area that is quiet and restful, with large oak trees and a few beautyberry shrubs that have purple fruits in the fall. The trail crosses Antioch Church Road up a set of stairs and turns left along a weedy area before it goes downhill and past mile marker 5. The next mile of trail is between the road and the WindRiver golf course. There is little tree cover, but many perennial flowers bloom alongside the trail in late summer, including frostweed, goldenrod and yellow crownbeard. The trail briefly crosses the golf course on several cement cart paths and goes downhill then off the golf course, past mile marker 6, and along a small ravine below the golf course. The ravine contains a stream that flows to a small cove that goes to the lake. The uphill side of the trail is steep, with large trees. From the ravine, the trail goes uphill through mature forest that provides shade, and large mushrooms can be seen. The trail flattens at the top of the hill, in a young woodland with many red cedar trees. Red cedar likes to grow in areas with limestone close to the surface, especially in sunny areas of former pastureland. From the top of the knoll, the trail goes downhill. Several sets of timber-tread stairs are present. At the bottom of the hill, the trail crosses a gravel road, a footbridge over an intermittent stream, and past two private boat docks. There are many autumn olive shrubs in this area. A scenic view bench at the side of Powerline cove just past mile marker 7 is a good place to rest and enjoy the view across the lake to the three old farm silos and Tanasi golf course. The trail continues south along Powerline cove. The slope above the trail is steep, and the trees are large, suggesting that the area was not used as a cow pasture in the past. Fan clubmoss is seen along the trail, and downy blue Lobelia blooms here in the late summer. The trail then flattens and goes past young pine and cedar trees, and turns to go around a small cove, at the end of which is a large powerline cut with 2 towers. In this sunny area are many wildflowers that bloom in the late summer, including thistle, frostweed, pokeweed, purple ironweed, goldenrods, yellow crownbeard, and Jerusalem artichoke. Many butterflies are seen here when flowers are blooming. From the powerline cut the trail goes uphill in a mixed hardwood (oak, hickory, maple) forest with an open understory. The area is humid, and moss grows along the trail. Mile marker 8 is passed, and the Davis Ferry section ends at the Glendale Trailhead and parking lot.

The Glendale Branch



Trail Parking

The north end of the Glendale Branch begins at the entrance to the parking lot at the end of Glendale Community Road, with the Glendale kiosk. The south end of the Glendale Branch is at the north entrance to the Coytee Branch loop trail. There is no vehicle road access to the Coytee loop trail, although the end of Coytee Road (with a small parking lot) is nearby.

Trail highlights

The Glendale Branch contains the Powerline Cove loop trail that begins about 0.4 miles from the Glendale trailhead. If the hiker starts and ends at the Glendale parking lot, the length of the loop hike is 2.3 miles, making it a good choice for family hikers. Both the Powerline Cove loop trail and the rest of the Glendale Branch offer views across Tellico Reservoir toward the Tanasi area of Tellico Village. Notable are some remarkably large trees, a historic concrete watering trough, and an open powerline cut with wildflowers that bloom in the summer and fall months.

Degree of Difficulty

The Glendale Branch is relatively flat and easy to hike, with short up and down slopes and one challenging hill.

Local History

The Glendale Branch is named for the farming community of Glendale, and the small stream (the Glendale Branch) that originates there. The stream can be seen on the side of Fisher Lane for much of its length. At mile 9.5 is a scenic view bench with views across the lake to the 3 farm silos of the former Davis family farm; the bench would have overlooked the Davis Ferry on the Little Tennessee River before Tellico Dam was closed. Powerline Cove is named for the large TVA power lines that cross the cove and Tellico Reservoir at mile 6 of the latter.

Trail Description

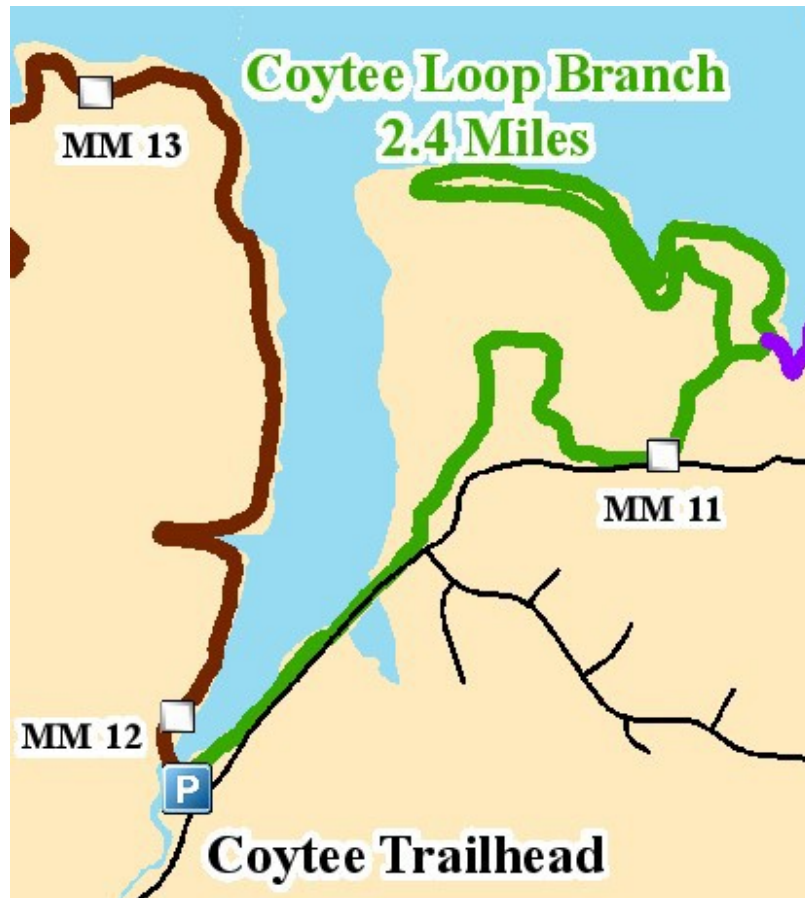
From the Glendale Trailhead at the end of Glendale Community Road (mile 8.1), the hiker proceeds south along the edge of Glendale cove and across 2 footbridges that span parts of the Glendale Branch stream. The trail goes past a private boat dock then up a wood stairway and into woods that go around the south side of the large Powerline cove. Christmas fern and other ferns, mosses, and Solomon's seal are present, and Indian pink may be blooming in June. Further along is a boat landing constructed of rock inside a wire mesh "gabion", which serves to reduce shoreline erosion at the site. Past the boat landing, the hiker has good views across the cove. At mile 8.6, the hiker crosses a footbridge over a deep streambed, next to which is a huge tulip poplar tree. Past it, the hiker sees signage for the "shortcut" and loop trail; stay right to see the Powerline loop trail. There are red cedar trees here, indicating that limestone is close to the surface. Dogwood, pine trees, and invasive autumn olive shrubs also grow in this second-growth woodland. Next is an open TVA power line cut in which sun-loving plants grow, including thistles, blackberry, autumn olive, cup plant, and Canada lettuce. The trees past the power line cut are larger and the forest is quieter. The hiker passes mile marker 9. The trail is close to the lake, with a young woodland above it, including dogwood, cedar, and autumn olive. At mile 9.25 is a scenic view bench; Tellico Dam can be seen far across the lake to your right, and three former grain silos (which were on Davis farmland before Tellico Dam was closed on the Little Tennessee River) can be seen in the lake, slightly to your left. From the scenic view bench, the trail goes uphill then becomes flat. A sign identifies a persimmon tree. Red cedar trees are common, and mushrooms are seen. The trail goes uphill again, past sugar maple trees and autumn olive and privet shrubs. Signs identify white oak, green ash, and hackberry trees. Large tulip poplars and a large oak are seen. At the top of the hill, the trail crosses a power line cut with two towers. This area is open (and hot in summer) with a good view of the TVA power lines crossing the lake at former Little TN River mile 6. In summer oxeye daisies bloom in the power line cut, and in September/October many tall wildflowers bloom, and butterflies are present. On the far side of the power line cut, the trail goes downhill, and signs identify blackgum, Shumard red oak, and sourwood trees. Redbud trees are also present. Redbuds bloom early in spring and provide the first source of nectar for overwintering bees. Sourwood trees bloom in early summer when long stalks of small white, fragrant flowers extend from the tips of their branches. The trail continues and soon intersects with the "shortcut" trail at mile

9.74. Going left takes the hiker back to the Glendale trailhead via the shortcut; going right takes the hiker toward the Coytee loop trail.

The 0.28-mile shortcut trail, when going toward the Glendale trailhead, starts uphill in an easterly direction. A barbed-wire fence is seen on the right side of the trail. Many tree roots cross the trail, indicating that soil is being eroded by water flowing downhill. The trail flattens out in a young woodland with a thick understory. There are many autumn olive and Chinese privet shrubs. A sign identifies a honey locust tree; these trees have sharp thorns and long, twisted, brown seed pods that drop to the ground in the winter months. A deep gully can be seen on the downhill side of the trail before the hiker reaches a footbridge over the gully and the end of the shortcut. A right turn takes the hiker back to the Glendale trailhead.

If the hiker continues right on the Glendale Branch toward the Coytee Loop Branch when reaching the shortcut trail from the Powerline cove loop, he/she goes downhill along a small cove with good views of the lake, and young trees. Mile marker 10 is passed. The trail is flat and close to the lake. An old concrete watering trough (about 4 feet wide and 15 feet long) is seen between the trail and the lake. The trail turns around another small cove, down a set of timber stairs, and across a private road; there is a boat dock lakeside and a house uphill of the trail on Coytee Road. Across a grassy area, a sign directs the hiker toward the Coytee Branch. Signs identifying a sugar maple, a red maple, and a dogwood are seen. Fan clubmoss and a trio of non-native Chinese privet, autumn olive, and "heavenly bamboo" border the trail. Signs identifying a loblolly pine and an eastern red cedar are seen before the hiker reaches the open area of a power line cut. The trail then goes uphill and across two sets of timber-tread steps to intersect with the north end of the Coytee Branch loop trail. Directional signs for the Coytee Trailhead and Coytee Loop are present.

Coytee Loop Branch



Trail Parking

Parking for the Coytee Loop Branch is located at the Coytee Trailhead on Coytee Road, which is reached from Axley Chapel Road. If the hiker wishes to park closer to the Coytee loop trail, Coytee Road continues past the large Coytee Trailhead parking lot to a second small parking lot close to mile 11 of the trail and the Coytee loop.

Trail Highlights

The Coytee loop is one of the oldest branches of the East Lakeshore Trail. It was completed in the year 2005 and started at the small parking lot next to Coytee Road. The highlight of the Coytee Loop Branch is the 1.3-mile Coytee loop. An excellent interpretative guide to the Coytee loop trail was written by Shaney Palmer in 2007. It can be found at the Tellico Village Library in a binder labelled "Interpretative Guides", Dewey decimal number 796.5. The guide describes the loop as if the hiker is proceeding in a clockwise direction around the loop. When going north from the Coytee trailhead, one passes marker "A" and the sign for a dogwood tree, then

turns left off the trail to enter the Coytee Loop. The hiker will pass wood posts that have carved letters B through H at the top, and metal signs at ground level that identify various trees along the trail. The letters identify sections in the interpretative guide that describe the ecosystem at each site. The Coytee loop trail contains both young and mature forest areas, excellent views across the lake to Tellico Village Tanasi homes, a scenic bench, several granite and limestone rock outcrops, and many interesting older and very large trees. In the spring, one may see yellow Trillium, violets, mayapples, and cutleaf toothwort blooming. Unfortunately, there are also many non-native and invasive plants on the Coytee loop trail, including privet, autumn olive (a spring bloomer), and Amur honeysuckle.

Degree of Difficulty

The Coytee loop trail has both uphill and downhill sections and is rocky and narrow in spots along the lakefront. The 1-mile trail section from the Coytee Trailhead to the Coytee loop is flat, close to or on the shoulder of Coytee Road as well as close to Coytee Cove, and easy to hike.

Local History

The Coytee Loop Branch is named after Coytee Springs. Coytee Springs was an elliptical pool of spring water about 12 feet long and 8 feet wide, between the Little Tennessee River and the bottom of a bluff that is now next to (or in) Tellico Reservoir. Coytee Springs is now underwater below the sharp turn at the south end of the Coytee loop trail. The springs were a holy place for the Cherokee Indians, as the water was considered to heal. Coytee (or Coyatee) was a Cherokee village or “meeting place”. In the late 1800s, the Linginfelter farm and homesite were located close to Coytee Springs on the east side of the Little Tennessee River.

Trail Description

When hiking from the south end of Coytee Branch to the north end where it intersects with the Glendale Branch, the hiker parks at the Coytee Road parking lot. The trail passes the kiosk and is flat and close to Coytee Road. An overhead electric transmission line is between the trail and the road. The trail here is sunny and partridge peas and other flowering plants are seen. When on Coytee Road the hiker passes signage for the River Cove development, a large, fenced boat dock on the lakefront, and Summit Hill Road before being directed off the road and back onto the trail. After a short distance, the trail splits, and the hiker goes to the right. The trail passes through a TVA power line clearing and into a woodland with many red cedar and dogwood trees, and moss on the ground. The trail is flat and can be narrowed by overgrowth of invasive Japanese stiltgrass (*Microstegium vimineum*), which is widespread throughout eastern Tennessee. The trail passes through a pinewood, across a small power line right-of-way, and into a small parking lot off Coytee Road. Crossing the parking lot, mile marker 11 is seen. In approximately 0.2 miles, the trail splits, and two signposts in succession direct the hiker left to the Coytee loop (turning left at the first signpost would lead to hiking the loop clockwise, turning at the second would result in going counterclockwise on the loop), or right to the Glendale Branch of the trail, which begins a short distance downhill.

The Coytee loop is not included in the East Lakeshore Trail mile marker calculations reflected by the mile marker posts; it therefore adds approximately 1.25 miles to the total trail length indicated by the mile markers. The loop trail has wood posts with engraved alphabetical letters from "A" to "H" to identify interesting natural features described in the Interpretative Guide noted above in Trail Highlights, as one proceeds clockwise on the loop. The loop begins in a small section of young forest (wood post engraved with "A"), and tree markers for a dogwood and a redbud. The trail is relatively wide and flat as it turns left onto the loop, and a huge downed with oak is seen. The wood post engraved with a "B" refers the hiker to a discussion of non-native plants in the Interpretative Guide. The trail goes downhill past another huge dead white oak tree. A shumard red oak, eastern redbud, and a hackberry tree are identified. After passing over a footbridge, the hiker goes uphill past wood post "C" in a pinewood with a loblolly pine, a black walnut, and a shagbark hickory identified. Large oak trees grow in this mature woodland. Wood post "D" is seen. The trail goes downhill to a directional post where it turns sharply right, in an area with many older, large red cedar trees that are growing over a limestone base. The trail is close to the lake on a steep slope, and "narrow trail" signs caution hikers to be mindful of their footing. Limestone and granite rock outcrops are seen, and these are discussed in the Interpretative Guide under post marker "E". A large beech tree is identified. Beech trees are "climax forest" trees in Tennessee. Further along the trail is a scenic view bench (marker "F" in the Interpretative Guide) overlooking the Tellico Reservoir toward Tanasi homesites in Tellico Village. Past the bench, a large basswood tree is identified. Yellow Trillium blooms close by in April. As the trail moves down to the lakeshore, Marker "G" notes the presence of ferns, fan clubmoss, and other spore-bearing plants. The trail goes around a small cove, then uphill past a labelled Black Gum tree. Double white blazes on one tree indicate the presence of a trail junction, and the trail divides to go either toward Glendale or up and across a set of timber-tread stairs to finish the Coytee loop. At the end of the loop trail, marker "H" is seen, and the trail passes the upper entrance to the loop as it heads toward Coytee.

The Sinking Creek Branch



Trail Parking

Parking for the Sinking Creek Branch is located at its north and south ends: the Coytee Trailhead parking lot on Coytee Road, and the Sinking Creek Trailhead parking lot at the intersection of National Campground Road and Axley Chapel Road. South of National Campground Road, Axley Chapel Road becomes the East Coast Tellico Parkway, which continues to Route 411 in Vonore. North of the intersection with National Campground Road, Axley Chapel Road continues to Route 95.

Trail Highlights

The 4.5-mile Sinking Creek Branch is notable for the TVA-built Coytee Bridge over the Glendale cove, and for the scenic views and natural features of the four coves that are seen along the trail: Coytee, Hannah Ferry, Owl Hollow, and Sinking Creek. One of the best easy family hikes on the East Lakeshore Trail is that from the Coytee Trailhead southwest to the Coytee Cove beach area, and back, for a round-trip distance of 1.5 miles. The hike starts by going up and over the Coytee bridge and into the woods that overlooks the Coytee Cove. The walking path is shaded by trees and mostly flat. When the trail moves downhill close to the lakeshore, there are

potential spots for fishing. Continuing to the Coytee Cove beach area, the hiker can relax on a bench or a sandy beach area, with beautiful views across the cove and lake.

Degree of Difficulty

The Sinking Creek Branch is moderately challenging to hike. There are uphill and downhill sections when going around the Owl Hollow and Hannah Ferry coves, and up to the bluffs on either side of them.

Local History

Sinking Creek originates on the south side of the Red Knobs, a series of hills with elevations of 1100-1250 feet that run southwest to northeast, north of Greenback. Sinking Creek has cut a narrow valley through the Red Knobs, and SR95 passes through this cut. The Sinking Creek Trailhead is at the intersection of National Campground Road and Axley Chapel Road. The National Campground itself is located at 1849 King Road in Greenback. In 1873, local churches from several denominations held a meeting at this site to unite families of former Confederate and Union soldiers under a large tent. The group incorporated and built an open meeting tabernacle to host an annual revival. Many local leaders, including members of the Hammontree, Blankenship, and Griffitts families, served on the Board of the National Campground Corporation.

Trail Description

Starting at the Coytee Trailhead, the hiker goes up and over the TVA-built Coytee bridge. Signage on the bridge recognizes trail builders Darrell Cuthbertson of the TVA, and long-time Trails Chairperson Bob Martin. After crossing the bridge, the hiker enters a shaded woodland uphill from Coytee Cove. Mile marker 12 is passed. There are good views of the cove from the trail. The trail goes downhill close to the water and small inlets, and across a footbridge over an intermittent stream. The area is quiet. The trail opens onto a small, sandy beach area with a bench to sit on. This is a good place to relax and enjoy the view across the cove. The trail continues uphill along the cove, and there are many invasive autumn olive shrubs seen; these plants fruit in the fall, with berries that gradually change in color from tan to red and have many small "dots". The fruits are edible but tart. Autumn olive (*Elaeagnus umbellata*) grows quickly and shades out understory plants. Mile marker 13 is passed, and the top of the bluff is reached. It is quiet here and the forest has some large oaks and occasional lowbush blueberry plants. The trail goes downhill, passes an old path that leads to the end of McKelvey Road (McKelvey Road meets Axley Chapel Road close to Axley Chapel Church), and goes across a flat area that was a former home site). At a bend in the trail, the hiker can see the rusted body of an old truck on the uphill side. There are also good views of the small Hannah Ferry cove. The hiker walks down across a 6-step stairway on the trail and onto Hannah Ferry Road, which is now overgrown. Signage directs the hiker to 3-step wood stairs downhill off Hannah Ferry Road. The hiker passes mile marker 14 along the north side of Hannah Ferry Cove. At the end of the cove is a small footbridge. The area on the south side of the cove is moist, and there are patches of fan

clubmoss and partridgeberry. Continuing through the woods south and above Hannah Ferry Cove, the hiker will see small but beautiful red mushrooms appropriately called “elf cups”. The trail then goes downhill toward Owl Hollow Cove. At mile 14.5 there is a lakeside scenic view bench that faces Toqua golf course across the lake. Sparkleberry shrubs are seen above the trail along the north side of the pretty cove. At the end of Owl Hollow cove is a short boardwalk, and jewelweed. The trail proceeds uphill on the south side of the cove. Tick trefoil plants are common, and “beggar’s ticks” adhere to one’s pants in the fall. Mile marker 15 is passed. The wood understory is open, and there are many mushrooms growing on the ground. The trail flattens and continues through a pine wood that is quiet and open and occasionally used by cows. The hiker is guided through this area by white blazes on the sides of trees next to the trail, and logs alongside the trail. The trail then goes downhill and crosses a small bridge over a deep, but usually dry, creek bed; the bridge has been named the “Kissing Bridge”. Mile marker 16 is passed about 200 yards from the bridge and the trail continues along the north side of the Sinking Creek cove. Erosion of the trail has led to exposure of many tree roots, and the hiker should be careful of his/her footing. Looking southeast, the hiker can see a bridge on the East Coast Tellico Parkway that crosses over Sinking Creek. On the trail a small footbridge is crossed at mile 16.25, then two cattle fence stiles are passed (they may be removed). The trail moves up and past directional signs to cross the parkway and a small bridge to arrive at the parking lot and trailhead kiosk at National Campground Road.

The Lotterdale Branch



Trail Parking

- 1) The north end of the Lotterdale Branch begins at the Sinking Creek Trailhead and parking lot at the corner of National Campground Road, where that road meets Axley Chapel Road and the north end of the East Coast Tellico Parkway.
- 2) The south end of the Lotterdale Branch is at the Lotterdale Campground entrance road off the East Coast Tellico Parkway. There is space for parking a car, but there is no parking lot.

Trail Highlights

The highlight of the 3.8-mile Lotterdale Branch is a mature hardwood forest with some huge trees on a bluff overlooking the lake, between mile markers 17 and 18. A scenic view bench along the lakeshore at mile 18.3 offers views of lakefront Toqua homes in Tellico Village. The trail also crosses over the Lotterdale inlet to the lake on a bridge for the East Coast Tellico Parkway, and there are excellent views of the Lotterdale Campground and Fishing Pier from the bridge. The trail passes through a quiet pine woods with a covering of soft needles, at mile 19.3.

Degree of Difficulty

The Lotterdale Branch is mostly flat and easy to walk, with short uphill and downhill sections to and from the bluff (miles 17.3 – 18). Crossing over the three fence stiles at miles 18.64-18.67 on the trail may be difficult for some hikers.

Local History

Lotterdale Knob is a hill with an elevation of 1237 feet in the Red Knobs, a series of hills north of Greenback; Lotterdale Knob is just south of Lotterdale Campground and appears to be the inspiration for naming the campground. In 1982, the TVA sold land to TRDA for development and recreation of the Lotterdale Cove Recreation Area. Before the damming of the Little Tennessee River, Jackson Ferry Road, which now ends at the East Coast Tellico Parkway, extended through Lotterdale Cove to the Little Tennessee River, and the site of Jackson's Ferry.

Trail Description

From the Sinking Creek Trailhead at National Campground Road, the trail crosses the small footbridge toward the East Coast Tellico Parkway and turns left to go alongside the guard rail on the Parkway. Step over the guardrail and hike across the bridge over Sinking Creek. After crossing the bridge, turn right and walk up the right side of Carpenter Loop Road. The trail leaves the road at a signpost to a footpath above Sinking Creek. Fan clubmoss can be seen along the trail, and many spider webs may be present, as small insects are numerous in this humid area. The trail moves back toward the road and up 4 timber-tread steps. The hiker proceeds a short distance up the road, then leaves it again to go down an old roadbed (that once led to a former housing site uphill of Sinking Creek). People sometimes camp or picnic here. Mile marker 17 is passed. A fence stile is present. The trail proceeds uphill through a quiet, wooded area with an overstory of mature oak, tulip poplar, maple, hickory, and walnut trees, with an open understory. Several trail switchbacks are present to reduce the grade. The hiker reaches the top of a bluff overlooking the lake and Sinking Creek. Here are huge red and white oak trees, many shagbark hickories, and an understory of redwood, dogwood, and pawpaw, with Solomon's seal at the ground level. Further along, a fence stile is crossed, mile marker 18 is passed, and the trail goes downhill. At lakeside is a scenic view bench facing the Toqua area of Tellico Village. The trail proceeds along the lakefront, next to an open farm field edged with a barbed-wire fence. Three footbridges allow the hiker to cross intermittently flowing streams. The trail then crosses three fence stiles in quick succession and passes a large maple tree. In the late spring, many blue violets can be seen in woods close to the trail here. A large beech tree with carved initials is seen, and in the summer, ripe grapes are on the ground, courtesy of an overhead grapevine. Large colonies of mayapples line both sides of the trail and in spring a few wild comfrey flowers are blooming. Mile marker 19 is passed. A fenced field for quail hunting appears on the right side of the trail as one approaches Jackson Cemetery Road. The trail goes down a 5-step stairway to Jackson Cemetery Road, turns left and down the road, then right at a Trail sign, and down wood steps to enter a quiet mixed forest of pine and hardwood trees. There are often webs of the triangulate orbweaver spider across the trail here;

this spider is small, and the name refers to its triangular abdomen, which is usually white in color on the back. Mosses, lichens, and pine needles are seen on the ground. White trail blazes guide the hiker. The trail intersects with a side trail to the Lotterdale Fishing Pier, and several lakeside spots further along the trail appear to be used by campers. Red flowers of trumpet creeper vines can be seen in trees in the spring, and pine needles cover the ground. The trail crosses a short foot bridge and goes up to the guardrail along the East Coast Tellico Parkway. The next 0.45 miles of trail is located along the Parkway (behind the guardrail) on the bridge over Lotterdale Cove. There are good views of the Lotterdale RV park and the Lotterdale Cove. As one crosses the bridge, a hat is useful to provide shade from the hot summer sun. Ragweed plants may be growing beside the trail. Mile marker 20 is passed close to the south end of the bridge. After crossing the bridge, the trail turns right to proceed along a wide, flat path next to a small cove that comes from the larger Lotterdale Cove. There are fishing spots here, and a day use campsite. The Lotterdale Branch ends at the entrance road for the Lotterdale Campground.

The Jackson Bend Branch



Trail Parking

- 1) The Peterson Road parking lot at the south end of the Jackson Bend Branch is located off Peterson Road close to its junction with the East Coast Tellico Parkway (ECTP). It is a large lot.
- 2) The entrance road to the Lotterdale Campground is at the north end of the Jackson Bend Branch. There is no parking lot present, but one can park along the entrance road.

Trail Highlights

The Jackson Bend trail both challenges and rewards the hiker. The section is long (5.1 miles) with some steep uphill and downhill sections, rocky areas where attention is required, areas that are wet and muddy after a rain, and places where the trail is very narrow and on a steep slope. The rewards include the excellent views from a high bluff, many small coves and streams, mature oak forest, interesting wildflowers, the best large rock formations on the East Lakeshore Trail, and both low wetland and upland forest scenery and wildlife.

Degree of Difficulty

The hiker should allow 3 hours to walk the Jackson Bend Branch in either direction, including brief stops for rest and observation. The uphill and downhill sections can be steep, and the trail is rarely flat; the Jackson Bend Branch is one of the most challenging hikes on the ELT.

Local History

Jackson Bend was a large curve in the Little Tennessee River at river miles 10-12 from its origin at the Tennessee River. Before the construction of the Tellico Dam, much of the farmland on the northwest side of the bend was owned by the Jackson family. The Jackson store was a favorite meeting place of local residents. The Jackson family established Jackson School, Jackson Church, and Jackson's Ferry, all of which are now under the water of Tellico Reservoir. Higher land on the east side of the Little Tennessee River at Jackson Bend still remains above water as Jackson Bend Island. At the south end of the Jackson Bend Branch is Griffiths Keep, named after the Griffiths family that came to Loudon County about 1800. At mile 24.9, a bridge passes over a small creek that crosses the trail. This creek is in a narrow ravine on the south side of the Red Knobs, and it flowed into the Little Tennessee River before the East Coast Tellico Parkway was built. The ravine was once referred to as Negro Hollow.

Trail Description

Starting from the Lotterdale Campground entrance road close to the East Coast Tellico Parkway, the Jackson Bend Branch goes south through a mature lowland hardwood forest with easy uphill and downhill sections. Two small streams are crossed by a foot bridge and a boardwalk. Mosses and ginger plants are seen trailside, along with invasive autumn olive shrubs. Mile marker 21 is passed at the intersection of the trail with a smaller trail that goes to the Lotterdale campground; signage is present to direct the hiker. The trail crosses a foot bridge over a small intermittent stream, then goes uphill and downhill along the north side of a small cove, the Teeter Road Cove. The trail intersects with an old extension of Teeter Road, and there is signage for a TVA designated camping area close to the side of the cove. Teeter Road itself is gravel and little used by the public except as an access road to the campsite and trail. Around the end of Teeter Road cove, crawfish holes, box turtles, and beaver-cut trees have been seen. Mile marker 22 is passed, and the trail continues uphill and downhill along the south side of the cove. In the spring, many yellow trillium plants are flowering here. Moving away from the cove, the trail goes uphill along switchbacks to a wide, high (>1,000-foot elevation) bluff above the lake, with a view of homes in Rarity Bay across the lake. This is a quiet area of upland hardwood forest with walnut, hickory, and tulip poplar trees. Small-flowered leafcup plants border the trail, and bloom in July. The presence of many small holes and mounds close to the trail suggest the presence of moles, chipmunks, and/or other small underground animals. From the bluff, the trail goes downhill to a low area with sassafras and pawpaw trees. Mile marker 23 is passed. The forest is young, the trail is rocky, and a large rock outcrop is present above the trail. Along the lakefront is a scenic view bench that is a good resting spot, with a view of Rarity Bay. This bench is dedicated to Nils Johannesen, a former trail builder. Behind the bench are two

large rock outcrops, about 200 feet apart and separated by a low area. Tiger swallowtail butterflies have been observed to “puddle” in low, wet areas of the trail here, and frogs may call from the shoreline. From the bench the trail continues around a rock outcrop and uphill along the side of the bluff. In early spring, yellow trillium and wild blue phlox are blooming, and mayapples and Solomon’s seal are growing. There are good views of the lake and the mouth of a cove that extends into the Connatser Development area. Along the trail above the side of this cove are some very large oak trees. Downy yellow foxglove may be blooming beside the trail in July. Looking downhill toward the water, turtles may be visible on fallen trees that extend out into the cove. Hikers are advised to stay on the trail as they pass several private homes, driveways, and boat docks in the next half-mile of trail. Landscape timbers border some of the trail. Mile marker 24 is passed, and the trail crosses a low area at the end of a small cove. Lakeside, jewelweed, swamp milkweed, morning glory, and other flowering plants are seen. The trail then goes uphill to a wooded area, then downhill to arrive at the north side of Griffiths Keep Cove. Along this cove, the trail crosses a private easement with a home and boat dock, to go uphill along an electric utility power line cut. Large oak, beech, and maple trees are seen. The trail then goes downhill, and down a steep stairway, to the edge of the cove. Several boathouses are seen. The trail continues along the hillside bordering the cove, crosses a driveway that leads to a boat dock, and turns right. A small foot bridge then a second bridge across a large drain culvert are crossed. The trail goes uphill close to a small streambed, to meet and cross the East Coast Tellico Parkway close to the Griffiths Keep entrance road. The trail along the parkway is on a gravel bed. It crosses over a private gravel driveway, goes downhill through a “weedy” area with many wildflowers and grasses, and enters a wooded area. The ground is low, and the trail can be wet. A stream (or pond when the stream is dammed by beavers) is seen between the trail and the parkway. A foot bridge crosses over the stream. Crawfish holes and millipedes are commonly seen, and the call of a bullfrog or two can often be heard in summer. The trail goes steeply uphill and across two sets of timber-tread steps. On the ridge at the top of the hill, there are views of the entrance to Foothills Pointe. The trail then goes downhill as mile marker 25 is passed, across a small stream, and back uphill into a pine forest covered with pine straw. The trail passes a sign identifying it as the Jackson Bend Branch of the East Lakeshore Trail and ends at the Peterson Road parking lot and trailhead.

The Morganton Branch



Trail Parking

- 1) Wildcat Pointe parking lot off the East Coast Tellico Parkway (ECTP)
- 2) Peterson Road parking lot off Peterson Road and close to its junction with the ECTP

Trail Highlights

- 1) The 1-mile Wildcat Ridge spur trail passes through a beautiful mature forest along a high and dry ridge. There are many ravines extending downward from both sides of the trail. The area is quiet with no housing sites or road crossings. The spur trail ends at a bench overlooking the lake, with a view of the bridge across Route 411.
- 2) There are good views of Baker Creek and residential housing across the wide creek inlet into Tellico Lake, and there is a bench from which to enjoy the view.

Degree of Difficulty

The hike north from the Wildcat Pointe parking lot to the Wildcat Ridge spur trail, or the hike up to the spur trail when coming from the Tellico Industrial Park, is moderately strenuous, as is the spur trail itself. The rest of the Morganton Branch trail is relatively flat, with a few short up/down sections. The trail may be narrow or wet in some spots.

Local History

The Morganton Branch of the trail is named after the former town of Morganton. Morganton was a regional business center and small community at the confluence of Baker Creek and the Little Tennessee River from its incorporation in 1813 in Loudon County until its purchase by TVA in the late 1960s. Residents and merchants of Maryville and other local towns came to

Morganton to buy and sell goods (including lumber from the mills on Baker Creek) to others in the Tennessee Valley and beyond, after Morganton became the last stop on a steamboat line connecting it to Knoxville in 1831. A ferry in Morganton also carried passengers across the Little Tennessee River from the early 1800s until 1961. The highest point in Morganton was the cemetery, and it is the only part of the former town that is not now under water. The Greenback Heritage Museum and Public Library have more information on the history of Morganton and its residents.

Trail Description

Hiking north from the parking lot at Wildcat Pointe, the hiker passes the Wildcat Pointe trailhead kiosk (trail mile 28.5) and goes steeply uphill into a mature forest. Many wood “water bars” are present to direct water off the trail. Close to the top of the hill is signage for the 1-mile Wildcat Ridge spur trail: the hiker can either go straight and downhill toward the parkway or elect to turn left and uphill for the spur trail. This is an out-and-back trail section, one mile each way. On the spur trail, the hiker continues uphill and soon enters a clearing with a large cell phone tower surrounded by fencing. The trail proceeds along the left side of the fencing, and on into the woods. The hiker will pass a sign identifying the trail as “The Mel Fisher Mile”, in recognition of Trail Chairperson Mel Fisher, under whose term this last constructed mile of the East Lakeshore Trail was built. The spur trail is on a high ridge that drops off into ravines on both sides; the highest elevations (1035-1045 feet) on the entire East Lakeshore Trail are on this ridge. The trail passes through an oak-hickory forest that is mature, with many large trees. The trail is dry. In addition to oak trees (chestnut and/or chinquapin oaks, as well as red oaks), and hickories, there is a distinct group of 3 large tulip poplars toward the end of the trail. There are many large sparkleberry shrubs along the first half of the trail. The ridge is quiet, and no street noise is heard. I photographed a female Southern trapdoor spider in the middle of the trail in July; most people never see a trapdoor spider in their lifetime, so I was very lucky. The spur trail ends going downhill to a bench (dedicated to trail builder Larry Smartt) overlooking the lake, with excellent views of the lake and the bridge across Rte. 411.

Upon returning from the Wildcat Ridge spur trail, the hiker can continue north on the Morganton Branch trail. The trail goes downhill in a pine forest, past many lowbush blueberry plants and some Solomon’s seal, and an area of moss and lichens. This forest becomes younger, with fewer large trees, as one proceeds downhill. The trail passes alongside a small streambed (often dry). A few yucca plants can be seen at mile marker 28.1. The trail reaches a small gravel road and turns right to go down the road. In a few hundred feet, the hiker turns left off the road, and proceeds north along the East Coast Tellico Parkway (ECTP) toward the entrance for the Industrial Park. After crossing the road into the Industrial Park, the trail passes (mile 27.82) across a footbridge into a wooded section that is very close to the ECTP. This trail section is mostly flat, subject to noise from vehicles on the ECTP, and weedy, with lots of poison ivy. The trail goes down some timber steps, crosses the ECTP at mile 27.38, and continues slightly downhill to the edge of a very wide and shallow section of Baker Creek. Directional signs alert the hiker to turns in the trail, which proceeds along Baker Creek. The trail here is weedy on both sides, with privet, Japanese stiltgrass, and poison ivy. Mile marker 27 is passed. At mile

mark 26.9, there is a long boardwalk over wet ground. Trumpet creeper vines with red flowers in early summer are seen in the small trees that grow alongside the boardwalk. The hiker can stop at a bench on the edge of Baker Creek (mile 26.88) and enjoy the view across the wide creek inlet toward the houses on the other side of the creek, in the housing development on Morganton Road.

From the bench on Baker Creek the trail continues through lakeside woods and up a stairway to the end of a parking lot for the TVA Morganton campground, and a trailhead kiosk. The campground is used by the public for camping, swimming, and fishing. The trail continues through the campground and woods and clearings and is sometimes wet. There is noise from vehicles on the ECTP, and little privacy. The trail then turns left to reach a set of stairs that lead to a guardrail on the ECTP, at the south end of the Baker Creek Bridge. After stepping over the bridge guardrail, the hiker walks over the bridge, then crosses the road and proceeds along the west roadside to a lift station. The trail turns left at the lift station and down toward the lake. Here there is a TVA sign indicating that the lakeshore clearing is a "Day Use Area". There is a view of the Morganton boat ramp across the lake; the boat ramp can be reached by car from Morganton Cemetery Road. Close to the day use area, kudzu grows rampantly. The trail proceeds from this lakeside clearing along the lakeshore to another clearing at mile 26.2. This site is also used by day campers and has access to the ECTP from a small parking area servicing a fenced gas pipeline station. Proceeding north from this site, the trail stays very close to the lake. One may occasionally see a box turtle beside the trail, and there are a lot of kudzu vines and poison ivy here. The trail passes between shrubs on both sides, and one is likely to walk through spider webs. There is a good view from the lakeside of Foothills Pointe homes and boat docks. The hiker passes mile marker 26 (on the ECTP side of the trail). The trail then turns toward the ECTP, passes alongside and below a guardrail, then moves back into the woods (where English ivy, poison ivy, and privet are present). The hiker goes across a small bridge over a wet area, then up a stairway to a gravel path alongside the ECTP. The path reaches another pumping lift station, with a small parking area, and turns toward the lake and a small clearing. At lakeside is a large oak tree with a rope swing. From this clearing, the trail leads north alongside the lake, through a wooded area with beech, oak, and pine trees, and views of Foothills Pointe. The trail turns right and goes uphill to the gravel shoulder alongside the ECTP. The trail crosses the ECTP at mile 25.66. After crossing the ECTP, the hiker goes downhill on a gravel path and across a small bridge. The area is wooded, and the trail is narrow with lots of poison ivy and invasive Japanese stiltgrass. After a short distance in woods, the trail then goes uphill, across several wooden steps, across Peterson Road, and uphill in a pine wood and into the parking lot (mile 25.4). This is the end of the Morganton Branch trail section.

Recommended Reading

1. Wildflowers of Tennessee. Jack B. Carman. Highland Rim Press. Tullahoma TN. 2001.
2. Wildflowers of Tennessee the Ohio Valley and the Southern Appalachians. Dennis Horn, Tavia Cathcart, Thomas E. Hemmerly, David Duhl. Lone Pine Publishing and the Tennessee Native Plant Society. 2nd Edition. 2013.
3. Gardening with the Native Plants of Tennessee. Margie Hunter. The University of Tennessee Press. Knoxville TN. 2002.
4. Native Trees of the Southeast. L. Katherine Kirkman, Claud L. Brown, Donald J. Leopold. Timber Press. Portland, Oregon. 2007.
5. Guide to the Trees, Shrubs, and Woody Vines of Tennessee. B. Eugene Wofford, Edward W. Chester. The University of Tennessee Press. Knoxville, TN. 2002.
6. Butterflies of Tennessee. Rita Venable. Maywood Publishing. Franklin TN. 2014.
7. Spiders of the Carolinas. L. L. Gaddy. Kollath+Stensaas Publishing. Duluth MN. 2009.
8. The Reptiles of Tennessee. M. L. Niemiller, R. G. Reynolds, B. T. Miller. The University of Tennessee Press. Knoxville TN. 2013.
9. The Amphibians of Tennessee. M. L. Niemiller, R. G. Reynolds. The University of Tennessee Press. Knoxville TN. 2011.
10. Birds of Tennessee Field Guide. Stan Tekiela. Adventure Publications, Inc. Cambridge, MN. 2003.
11. Valley So Wild. Alberta and Carson Brewer. The University of Tennessee Press. Knoxville TN. 1975.
12. Busselltown. Henry Molter. Self-published. Available at the Greenback Public Library, Greenback TN.

Contact Information

To contact the author, report a “sighting” or information about the trail, or volunteer to maintain the trail, please write and send your email to:

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