

WILDLIFE WATCHING

Throughout the park, there are many opportunities to observe wildlife from a safe distance. Feeding wildlife is prohibited.

Holman Lake provides habitat for many animals, including green herons, blue herons, and waterfowl. The west end of the lake is home to wood ducks and painted turtles. Bald eagles and ospreys are often seen fishing in Holman Lake. Many waterfowl use the lake as a rest stop during migration, including Canada geese, mallards, mergansers, buffleheads, and common loons.

A wide variety of birds and mammals inhabit the park’s forest, field, and riparian habitats. White-tailed deer and warblers can often be seen near the forest edges. Muskrats and minks often visit areas near Little



Great egret

Geology

The Little Buffalo Valley is underlain by interbedded shales, siltstones, and some very fine-grained sandstone. These rocks were laid down during the Devonian period between 380 and 390 million years ago in a shallow sea. The sea was teaming with life, and much fossil evidence remains to prove this including trilobites, crinoids, and brachiopods. Several shale pits allow visitors to look for evidence of the past. Contact the park office for rules regarding fossil hunting.

HIKING: 10 miles

**Blue Ball Trail**  
0.25 mile | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | No blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, potable water, benches

This path connects the historic Blue Ball Tavern to the Covered Bridge Trail and Shoaffs Mill Area. Follow the trail along the stream and through a patch of old ash trees beloved by the park’s woodpeckers.

**Buffalo Ridge Trail**  
1.5 miles | Most difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | White blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, picnic tables

Traveling along a ridge that was once logged to fuel the nearby Juniata Furnace, this trail winds up to the top of Buffalo Ridge. Look closely when hiking for flat, rounded areas with no trees; these are charcoal hearths.

**Campground Spur Trail**  
0.5 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Yellow blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Starting at the campground, the trail passes by a pond inhabited by panfish, bass, and pickerel frogs. Enjoy lots of spring wildflowers as the trail gently descends toward the bottom of the ridge and connects with Middle Ridge Trail.

**Covered Bridge Trail**  
0.35 mile | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | No blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, potable water, picnic tables, benches

Covered Bridge Trail is a gravel trail that connects the historic Clays Covered Bridge, Blue Ball Trail, and Way Car 12, the historic railway car. The trail passes directly through the East Day Use Area where you can find a playground, entertainment pavilion, and picnic tables. Additionally, it travels along and over Little Buffalo Creek and provides access to many areas to see aquatic wildlife.

**Exercise Trail**  
1.2 miles | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | No blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, benches

Along the trail, 18 stations feature exercise equipment and instructional signage. Additionally, the trail includes a section that runs along a trout creek and travels through an area of open habitat, home to Eastern bluebirds.

**Fishermans Trail**  
1.0 mile | Easiest hiking | Out-and-back trail | Yellow blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, potable water, picnic tables, benches

Fishermans Trail is a gravel trail that travels along the lake and connects the Swimming Pool Area to the Shoaffs Mill Area via the Dam Breast or Mill Race Trail. Situated in a dense stand of hemlocks, the mostly shaded trail is usually cooler than surrounding areas and ideal for observing wildlife or finding a fishing spot.

**Gantt Trail**  
0.32 mile | More difficult hiking | Connector trail | Yellow blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

Connecting Mill Race and Fishermans trails, this rocky trail is along the eastern end of the lake. Winding through a hemlock forest, the trail climbs and descends Buffalo Ridge.

**Little Buffalo Creek Trail**  
1.9 miles | More difficult hiking | Loop trail | Blue blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking, cross-country skiing recommended  
**Trailhead amenities:** modern restrooms, potable water, picnic tables

Little Buffalo Creek Trail runs from pavilions 1 and 2 to the far west end of the park, traveling along the creek where there are plenty of fishing spots. It passes through habitats that include forest, wetland, shrubland, and meadows.

Natural springs cause the trail to be wet and muddy in places throughout the year, but it is a good area to hear warblers calling from the trees that line the creek. In the winter, enjoy cross-country skiing on the flat trail.

**Middle Ridge Trail**  
2.5 miles | Most difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Red blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

This trail runs from the Exercise Trail in the east end of the park to the Creek Trail in the west, crossing over Little Buffalo Road at both ends. Throughout the trail you will experience both change in elevation and the various habitats that accompany it, including some open field environments that offer scenic views of Holman Lake.

**Mill Race Trail**  
0.5 mile | More difficult hiking | Connector trail | Orange blazes  
**Recreations permitted:** hiking

This trail follows the mill race from Shoaffs Mill to the mill dam where water is directed from Juniata Furnace Run down to the waterwheel. After crossing the mill dam, look for amphibians and other wildlife in the wet areas surrounding the stream as it meets with Little Buffalo Creek.

