

A Pennsylvania Recreational Guide for Ridley Creek

Ridley Creek
State Park



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

Pennsylvania State Parks Mission

The primary purpose of Pennsylvania state parks is to provide opportunities for enjoying healthful outdoor recreation and serve as outdoor classrooms for environmental education. In meeting these purposes, the conservation of the natural, scenic, aesthetic, and historical values of parks should be given first consideration. Stewardship responsibilities should be carried out in a way that protects the natural outdoor experience for the enjoyment of current and future generations.



2023



RIDLEY CREEK STATE PARK



Ridley Creek State Park

Ridley Creek State Park encompasses over 2,606 acres of Delaware County woodlands and meadows. The gently rolling terrain of the park, bisected by Ridley Creek, is only 16 miles from Center City Philadelphia. The park is an oasis of open space in an urban area.

Directions

GPS DD: Lat. 39.95065 Long. -75.45175

The main entrance to Ridley Creek State Park is on Sandy Flash Drive South at Gradyville Road. For online directions, use the address for the main park entrance: 341 Gradyville Rd, Edgmont Township, PA.

Reservations

Make online reservations at www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Spend the Day

Park visitors enjoy a variety of recreational opportunities year round. Public use areas are open daily from sunrise to sunset.

PICNICKING: There are 12 separate picnic areas with many picnic tables, charcoal grills, and modern restrooms. Restrooms in areas 7 and 17 are open year round. Electricity is available at Pavilion 17. Several of the areas have large fields suited to sports activities. Areas 3, 8, 11, and 17 have playground equipment and picnic pavilions. Pavilions can be reserved up to 11 months in advance for a fee. Unreserved picnic pavilions are free on a first-come, first-served basis. Pavilions 11A and 11B are ADA accessible.

FORMAL GARDENS: The gardens by the park office are a popular attraction and wedding site.

BIKING: The 4.3-mile, paved, Multi-use Trail (MUT) follows Sycamore Mills Road Trail and Forge Road Trail. Bicyclists and pedestrians may access the trail via parking lots 7, 11, 15, and 17. Bikes are prohibited on unpaved hiking trails. E-bikes are permitted but must follow all e-bike guidelines. www.dcnr.pa.gov/Pages/EBikePolicy.aspx

HORSEBACK RIDING: A 5.9-mile, multi-use trail system begins in Picnic Area 8. Be cautious of other trail users. A parking lot for trailers is at the trailhead. Two private horse farms operate stables within the park.

HUNTING AND FIREARMS: About 1,200 acres are open to archery hunting for deer during established seasons.

Hunting woodchucks, also known as groundhogs, is prohibited. Dog training is only permitted from the day following Labor Day through March 31 in designated hunting areas. The Department of Conservation and Natural Resources and the Pennsylvania Game Commission rules and regulations apply. Contact the park office for ADA accessible hunting information.

Use extreme caution with firearms at all times. Other visitors use the park during hunting seasons. Firearms and archery equipment used for hunting may be uncased and ready for use only in authorized hunting areas during hunting seasons. In areas not open to hunting or during non-hunting seasons, firearms and archery equipment shall be kept in the owner's vehicle or enclosed trailer. Exceptions include: law enforcement officers and individuals with a valid *Pennsylvania License to Carry Firearms* are authorized to carry a firearm concealed on their person while they are within a state park.



FISHING: Ridley Creek is stocked with trouts and provides excellent angling opportunities. The portion of the creek from Sycamore Mills Dam to the mouth of Dismal Run is a catch and release, fly fishing only area. An ADA accessible fishing platform is along Sycamore Mills Road Trail. To access the ADA fishing platform by vehicle, a permit must be acquired at the park office. Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission regulations and laws apply.

Enjoy the Winter

CROSS-COUNTRY SKIING: Cross-country skiers may use hiking and multi-use trails when snow cover permits. Bridle Trail is recommended.

SLEDDING: A grassy slope by the park office is popular for sledding.

LEARN, EXPERIENCE, CONNECT

Ridley Creek State Park offers a wide variety of programs from April through November. Gain a better understanding of the park's natural, cultural, and historical resources through guided outdoor recreation, hands-on activities, walks, special events, and other programs.

Curriculum-based environmental education programs are available to schools and organized groups. Call the park office to schedule a group program. A variety of professional development workshops are offered for teachers.

Contact the park office or explore the online calendar of events, <https://events.dcnr.pa.gov>, for more information on programs and other learning experiences.



HIKING: 17.7 miles

The trails pass through a variety of habitats in the central portion of the park.

Blue Trail

2.3 miles | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Blue blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

Beginning near Picnic Area 9, this trail offers woodland scenery as it travels through the park and has a small loop near Picnic Area 14.

Bridle Trails

4.9 miles | More difficult hiking | Loop trail | No blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking, equestrian

Beginning at the horse stables near the center of the park, the Bridle Trail follows two distinct loops through the northern section of the park.

Fishermans Trail

0.3 mile | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | No blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

Beginning near Picnic Area 4, this trail provides access to great fishing areas.

Mansion Gardens Trail

1.0 mile | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | No blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

This paved loop is accessed near the parking lot at the mansion and travels around the historic gardens and mansion area.

Orange Trail

1.7 miles | More difficult hiking | Loop trail | Orange blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

Traveling south from Gradyville Road, this trail is on the east side of Ridley Creek.

Multi-use Trail (MUT)

4.3 miles | Easiest hiking | Loop trail | No blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking, biking

This paved, multi-use trail travels through the woods, by the agricultural fields, and next to Ridley Creek. It offers great views and fishing opportunities along the easy path.

White Trail

4.1 miles | More difficult hiking | Loop trail | White blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

This meandering trail loops through the park and can be used to link to other trails.

Yellow Trail

4.1 miles | More difficult hiking | Out-and-back trail | Yellow blazes

Recreations permitted: hiking

Accessed from Picnic Area 16 or the park office/mansion area, this trail meanders throughout a majority of the park and intersects many other trails.

Stay the Night

ORGANIZED GROUP TENTING: Qualified, organized groups may rent the 120-person area from April to October. A restroom with flush toilets and potable water is in the area. No showers are available. Advance reservations are required.



WEDDINGS AND RECEPTIONS

The Hunting Hill Mansion provides an elegant and unique venue for weddings and other receptions. The architecture and décor of the English Tudor style manor house make for an unforgettable setting.

The facility can accommodate an event of up to 150 people. The rental package includes the following areas: Ballroom, ground floor of the Grand Staircase, Bride's Room, South Patio, and one outdoor garden site.

For more information, contact Peachtree Catering at 484-580-8260. www.peachtreecatering.com



COLONIAL PENNSYLVANIA PLANTATION



The Colonial Pennsylvania Plantation provides visitors with an accurate picture of life on a Delaware County farm prior to the American Revolution.

The plantation has been a working farm for over 300 years. It is restored to a late 18th-century appearance complete with animals typical of the period and authentically-clothed historical interpreters. On weekends from April to November, visitors can observe the farm family cooking over the open hearth, preserving foods, processing textiles, tending field crops, and performing other chores necessary to survival in the 18th century.

A fee is charged and group tours are available by reservation. The plantation is closed to public visitation during the winter months. 610-566-1725. www.colonialplantation.org

WILDLIFE WATCHING

The park's 2,600-acres provide important habitat and open space in the urban sprawl of southeastern Pennsylvania. Habitats within the park include old growth and secondary growth forests, fields and meadows, wetlands, and the creek corridor. The state mammal, the white-tailed deer, is common, along with foxes, raccoons, rabbits, and squirrels. Great blue herons frequent Ridley Creek. Many species of songbirds can be seen and heard in the park.

The park is home to many large, old trees, some dating back to colonial times. Tulip poplar and oak, beech, walnut, maple, sycamore, and hickory species dominate the tree canopy. Spicebush, dogwood and witch hazel species make a colorful forest understory.

The rarest and most unique tree in the park is the large Franklin tree, *Franklinia alatamaha*, by the Hunting Hill Mansion. This short tree has large, shiny leaves that turn orange and red in the fall. The large, white flowers bloom in early autumn. In 1765, noted botanists John and William Bartram discovered the species growing in one spot in Georgia. A decade later, William collected seeds and planted them in Philadelphia. By 1803, the last Franklinia was extinct in the wild. All Franklin trees today are descendants of the first trees propagated by the Bartrams, and named for their friend Ben Franklin.



HISTORY



Within the park boundaries was a small 18th century village, which grew up around the site of a mill. Now known as Sycamore Mills, the area had been previously named Bishop's Mill and Providence Mill. The miller's house, the office, library, and several small mill workers' dwellings are currently used as private residences. The park's historic district has been designated on the National Register of Historic Places.

The park office is in the Hunting Hill Mansion, built by the Jeffords family in 1915. The mansion was built around a 1789 Pennsylvania stone farmhouse that forms the core of the building and serves as the reception center.

Park property was purchased in the 1960s with Project 70 funds and developed with the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Park facilities were dedicated to public use in August of 1972.

INFORMATION AND RESERVATIONS

Ridley Creek State Park

1023 Sycamore Mills Road
Media, PA 19063-4398
610-892-3900

RidleyCreekSP@pa.gov


An Equal Opportunity Employer

Make online reservations at www.dcnr.pa.gov/StateParks or call toll-free 888-PA-PARKS (888-727-2757), 7:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday to Saturday.

Electric Vehicle Charging Station

A 2-plug, electric vehicle charging station is available for public use in the mansion parking lot. Please move to another parking space once your vehicle has been charged.

Access for People with Disabilities

 This symbol indicates facilities and activities that are Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accessible for people with disabilities. This publication text is available in alternative formats.

If you need an accommodation to participate in park activities due to a disability, please contact the park you plan to visit.

In an Emergency

Call 911 and contact a park employee. Directions to the nearest hospital are posted on bulletin boards and at the park office.

NEAREST HOSPITAL

Riddle Hospital
1068 West Baltimore Pike
Media, PA 19063
484-227-9400



Protect and Preserve Our Parks

Please make your visit safe and enjoyable. Obey all posted rules and regulations and respect fellow visitors and the resources of the park.

- Be prepared and bring the proper equipment. Natural areas may possess hazards. Your personal safety and that of your family are your responsibility.

- Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

- Because uncontrolled pets may chase wildlife or frighten visitors, pets must be physically controlled, attended at all times, and on a leash, caged, or crated. Electronic fences and leashes are prohibited.

Nearby Attractions

Information on nearby attractions is available from the Destination Delco Tourism Bureau. 601-565-3679. <http://visitdelcopa.com>

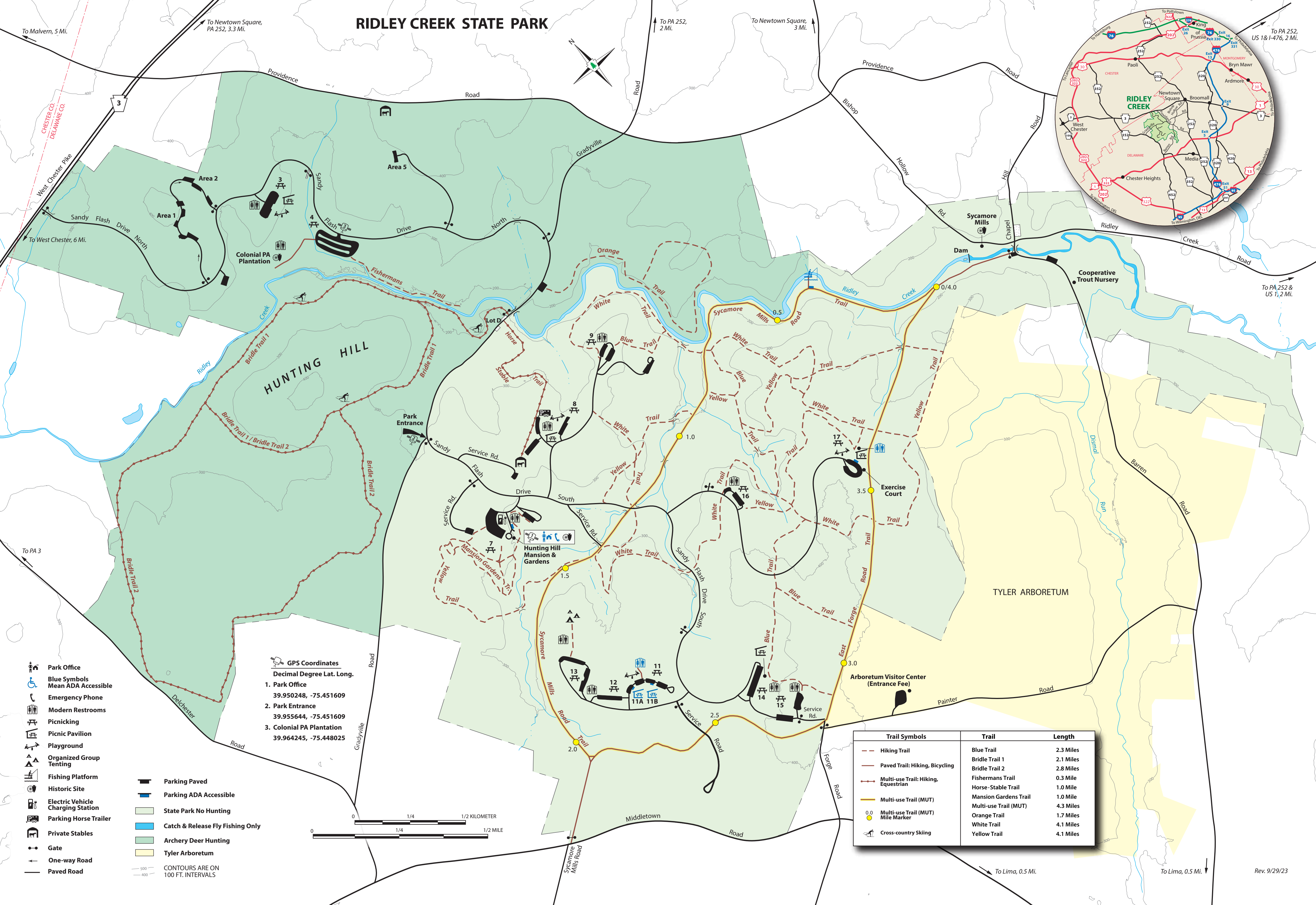
Tyler Arboretum is one of the oldest arboreta in the northeastern United States. The non-profit public garden encompasses 650 acres of renowned plant collections, heritage and champion trees, historic buildings, and hiking trails. Most of the southern boundary of Ridley Creek State Park is shared with the arboretum. 610-458-9134. www.tylerarboretum.org







The 493-acre **Fort Washington State Park** is rich in modern recreational facilities and historical significance. The park is popular with hikers, birders, and picnickers. 215-591-5250

The 1,727-acre **Marsh Creek State Park** is in the rolling hills of north central Chester County. The park contains the 535-acre Marsh Creek Lake and surrounding land, which is a wonderful resource for fishing, sailing, wildlife watching, hiking, mountain biking, picnicking, and hunting. 610-458-5119

White Clay Creek Preserve and **Big Elk Creek State Park** are in southern Chester County, bordering Delaware and Maryland. Connecting to nearby natural areas, the White Clay Creek and Big Elk Creek valleys have outstanding scenic, wildlife, recreational, and cultural value. 610-274-2900

RIDLEY CREEK STATE PARK



Trail Symbols	Trail	Length
 Hiking Trail	Blue Trail	2.3 Miles
 Paved Trail: Hiking, Bicycling	Bridle Trail 1	2.1 Miles
 Multi-use Trail: Hiking, Equestrian	Bridle Trail 2	2.8 Miles
 Multi-use Trail (MUT)	Fishermans Trail	0.3 Mile
 Multi-use Trail (MUT) Mile Marker	Horse- Stable Trail	1.0 Mile
 Cross-country Skiing	Mansion Gardens Trail	1.0 Mile
	Multi-use Trail (MUT)	4.3 Miles
	Orange Trail	1.7 Miles
	White Trail	4.1 Miles
	Yellow Trail	4.1 Miles