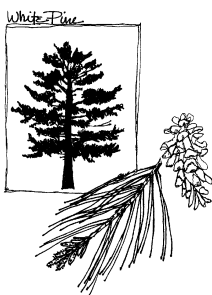


14. The larger tree is a **white pine**. You can identify this pine from others by its needles. If you look closely, the needles are in bundles of five, whereas other pines come in bundles of two's or three's. Pine is a soft wood, unlike oaks which are hard woods. The lumber from these trees is commonly used in construction.



15. American Beech trees can be easily found throughout the park in all four seasons. With its smooth, lightly colored bark and yellow to brown autumn colored leaves being visible even in winter, it is a hard tree to miss. The nut of this tree provides an important food source to wildlife.

16. The plant growing throughout this area is called **fly poison**. When not in bloom, you can recognize it by the long broad grass-like leaves that grow from the base of the plant. During June and July this plant easily stands out from the vegetation around it due to the cylindrical shaped bunch of small white flowers that tops off a long slender stem growing out of the plant's base. Colonists mashed the bulb of this plant and mixed it with sugar to attract and kill the flies plaguing their livestock, hence the name 'fly poison'. ***This plant is considered poisonous.***



***DO NOT TOUCH IT!***



17. The lush green foliage blanketing the forest floor is called **hay-scented fern**. When the fronds are crushed, they smell like fresh-cut hay, giving this plant its name. A common fern, it can quickly grow into a large colony - especially in areas that are over browsed by deer. The thick ground cover created by hay-scented fern can prevent acorns and other seeds from sprouting by blocking out the necessary sunlight.

18. The numerous **rotting hemlock stumps** in this area are still here because of the natural preservatives found in the wood. The same preservative is found in the bark, which was harvested and used to tan animal hides; a major industry in the late 1800's. In nearby Lehigh Gorge State Park, the remnants of the *Lehigh Tannery* are still visible. At one time, it was the second largest tannery in the nation.

Please continue along the path until you come to where the trail intersects with the starting point. Turn to your RIGHT and exit towards the parking lot.

**We hope you enjoyed your walk.**



**Please stop by the new visitor center sometime during your visit!**



***Are you ready for more? Visit nearby Nescopeck State Park and pick up a self-guided trail brochure for the Lake Trail in the park office.***

This trail, as well as benches, bird houses, and posts have been created and refurbished for Hickory Run State Park by Brent Merkel of Troop 65, Minsi Trails Council, for his Eagle Scout Project.

## For more information

Hickory Run State Park  
3 Family Camp Road  
White Haven, PA 18661

(272) 808-6192  
hickoryrunsp@pa.gov



**pennsylvania**

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION  
AND NATURAL RESOURCES

www.dcnr.state.pa.us

## Hickory Run State Park

## Nature Trail Self-guided Brochure



The eastern hemlock (*Tsuga Canadensis*) is the state tree of Pennsylvania.

Designated on June 23, 1931, this mighty tree once dominated our forests.

Valued by settlers for both its lumber and bark, the hemlock was essential for pioneer survival.



## Welcome...

Enjoy a leisurely walk through these woods and discover some of the hidden treasures of Hickory Run State Park. Along the way you will see numbered posts that correspond with the paragraphs in this brochure. Take your time at each station and appreciate the natural features that are described here.

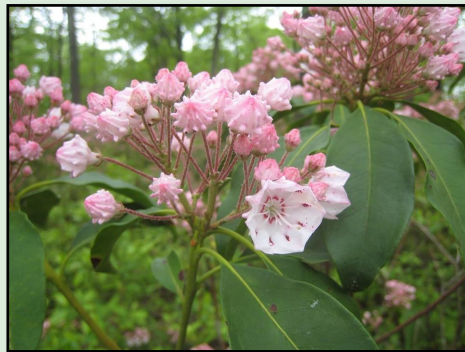
1. The tall evergreen trees are **eastern hemlock**. Lumbermen sought these trees in early 1900s. The wood was used in the construction of houses and other buildings. The bark from hemlock trees was also used in the tanning of animal hides.

2. The large green-leaved shrubs are **rhododendron**, an evergreen plant that keeps its foliage year round. In the summer, the rhododendron bears a large flower that ranges in varying pink hues that will appear more white in color as the petals unfurl. These plants usually grow on cool mountain slopes along stream banks and even in swamps. It is commonly mis-



taken for mountain laurel, another plant species in the same family *Ericaceae* or Heath Family. Members of this family typically grow in acidic soils.

3. The nearby lowland area is a **swamp**. Swamps are forested wetlands that occur where the water table is above the soil surface. These areas may have standing water part of the year or year-round. Not all plants can survive in such wet areas. Skunk cabbage is plant that has adapted to growing here. Trees such as poplars and maples also do well.



4. The state flower of Pennsylvania is **mountain laurel**. This evergreen shrub is often confused with its rhododendron cousin. The terminal flower clusters are composed of many small pink to white cup-shaped flowers that each contain 10 anthers. Bumble bees will land on the flower and the anthers will collapse, attaching pollen to the insect. This is an adaptation that this plant has developed to help with cross pollination.

5. Here you will see a **rotting tree**. When this tree was alive, it was shelter for many types of birds and animals. Now, as it lies on the ground, it still provides nutrients to the soil allowing new plants and trees to grow.

6. In front of you, you will notice several **uprooted trees**. Wet, saturated ground, combined with shallow root systems, made it easy for a strong wind to blow them over. Notice how the roots picked up the soil and rocks as it fell over, leaving a depression in the ground where it once stood.

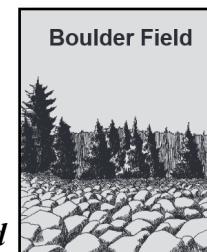
7. Take a moment to consider the **life cycle of a tree**. At one time a large tree stood in front of this post. After it died, insects began to make tunnels in the rotting wood. Woodpeckers created large holes in search of those insects. The holes provided a place for birds and squirrels to nest in. After the tree fell over decomposers went to work converting it back to soil so another tree could take root and begin to grow.

8. On the ground you will see a **small ground level bush with oval shaped leaves**. This is a lowbush blueberry plant. You can find them throughout the park and along this trail. In the spring, the small green berries will start to grown and by mid-summer, they will turn a dark blue and provide food for much of the visiting wildlife including black bear. **Remember, if you're not 100% positive it is edible—DO NOT EAT IT!**

9. In the area around you, you may find trees that have their **roots exposed above ground**. This can occur when a young tree takes root in and around the stump of a dead tree. After time, the stump rots away, leaving the roots still holding their shape where the stump used to be.

10. Using your keen observation skills peek behind the numbered post and you may notice a small field of **rocks**. There are three main types of rock; sedimentary, igneous, and metamorphic. Sedimentary rocks are formed by the cooling and recrystallization of molten lava, and metamorphic are sedimentary and igneous rocks that are transformed through the process of heat and pressure to form a rock of a different character. Sedimentary rocks are the most predominate in this area of Pennsylvania, but due to glaciers that have transported rocks from other areas; you may find other types as well.

**Have you visited Hickory Run's Boulder Field yet? It's the ultimate rock experience! Pick up an informational brochure about Boulder Field in our visitor center before heading out to explore the field on your own!**



11. By now you should be entering an **open area** along the trail. Take a moment to relax on one of the benches and look around. If you're quiet enough, you may see a bird or two, a butterfly, or even a white-tailed deer.

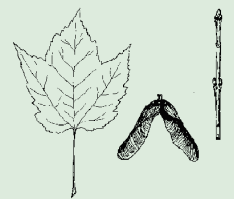
12. On the ground is a soft blanket of **green moss**. If you look around you may see some throughout the trail on fallen logs and along the ground. Moss assists with the breakdown of fallen trees, eventually creating a fine layer of topsoil for other plants to take root. Moss also holds loose dirt in place, helping to prevent erosion.



13. A large variety of **trees** grow in Pennsylvania. If you look around, you can see several different species. Some common trees that occur in this area are birch, oak, hemlock, maple, and white pine. Can you identify these trees?



Sweet Birch



Red Maple



White Oak



Red Oak



Hemlock



White Pine