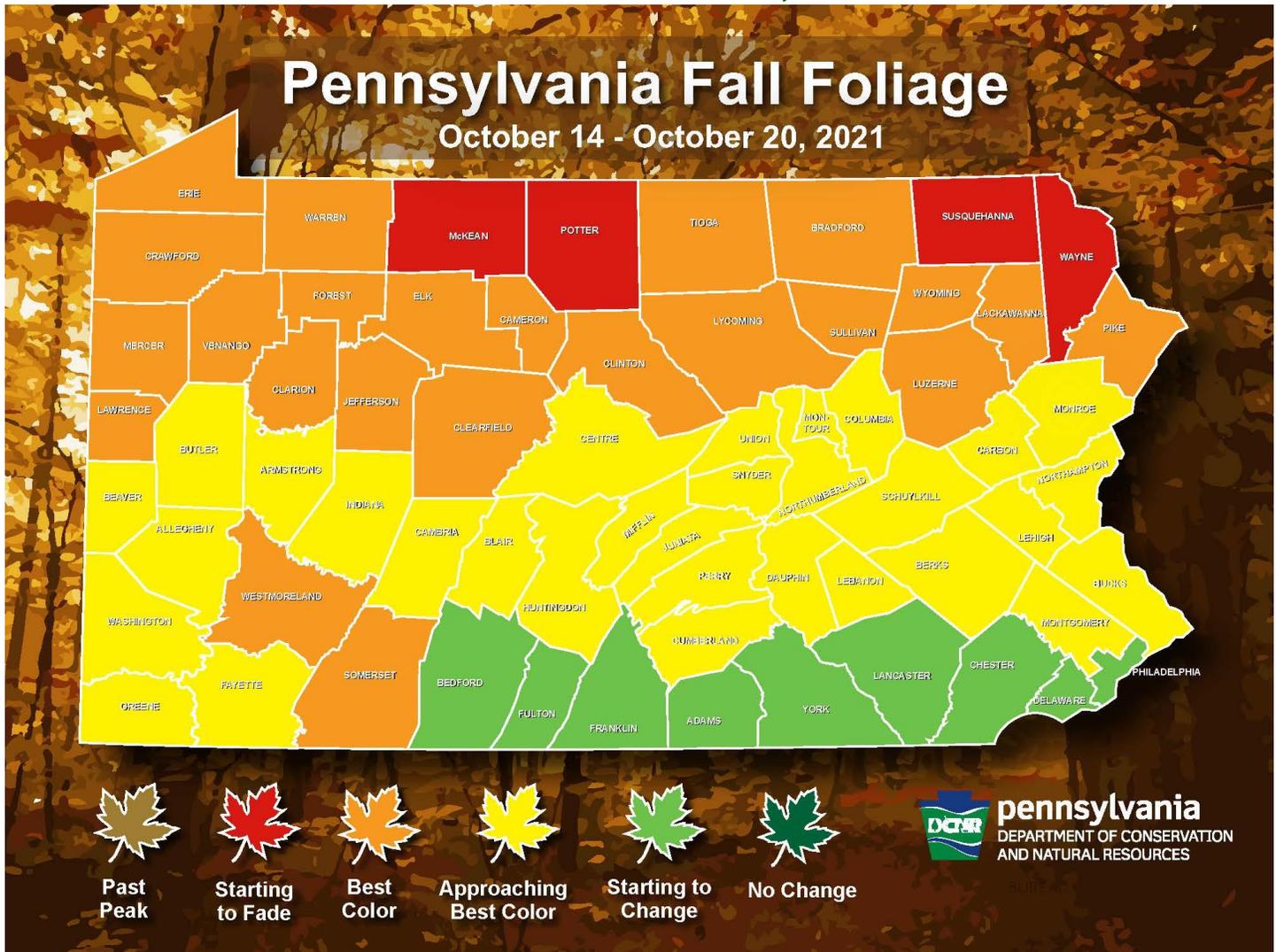


**Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources
Bureau of Forestry**

PENNSYLVANIA WEEKLY FALL FOLIAGE REPORT

October 14 – October 20, 2021



To predict peak season from the colors, use these guidelines:

- Dark Green/No Change= peak is *three weeks to a month* away
- Light Green/Starting to Change= peak is *approximately two to three weeks* away
- Yellow/Approaching Best Color= peak is *approximately one week* away
- Orange/Best Color= foliage is *peaking this week*
- Red/Starting to Fade= still some nice color but won't last more than *a few more days*
- Brown/Past Peak= all or nearly all color *is gone*

Statewide Fall Foliage Overview

Peak color has arrived in a massive swath of the northern tier, Allegheny Plateau, Laurel Highlands, and Poconos. The pronounced cooldown that is expected to arrive this weekend should drive a vibrant bloom of additional color throughout the state. Fall foliage enthusiasts should focus on the northern half of the commonwealth and higher elevations to find vivid fall splendor this week.

Northwestern Region

The district manager in Cornplanter State Forest District (Warren, Erie counties) reported that most maples are in full color, as are dogwoods, black gum, ash, and hickories. Many oaks are still green, but the predicted cooler night temperatures should compel their fall transition. Yellow and dark crimson are the two most prominently displayed colors; but orange, gold, and russet hues are also appearing on the landscape.



Bright hickory, Cornplanter State Forest District. (photo by C. Stelter)

Some routes to view and enjoy fall foliage include Route 666 from East Hickory west, Route 62 from Franklin/Oil City through Tionesta to Warren, routes 59 and 321 to the Longhouse National Scenic Byway, Route 8 from Oil City through Titusville and into Erie County, and routes 27 and 77 in Crawford County.

Northcentral Region

In Susquehannock State Forest (Potter, McKean counties), northern hardwoods have faded, but oak forests south of Route 6 are just beginning to peak. Route 44 south of Coudersport is a great option for a scenic drive in the region.

The vast oak forests of Sproul State Forest are approaching best color, currently. Some northern hardwoods species (birch, cherry) are still contributing bright colors. Peak foliage conditions are expected to persist throughout the week for the region. Route 144 is a recommended drive to observe some beautiful fall scenery.

In Tiadaghton State Forest, mixed oak forests are currently just beginning to peak. Many northern hardwoods are also adding bright yellow shades to the forest canopy. Forest visitors are recommended to hike the numerous trails of the Miller Run Natural Area (Lycoming County) to see some excellent fall color. Routes 414 and 44 are good options for a scenic drive to enjoy some the area's autumn color.



Norcross Vista, Ridge Road, Elk State Forest. (photo by T. Herzing)

Foresters in Elk State Forest (Elk, Cameron counties) said many of the bright red maples lost leaves during rain over the weekend, but birches are about to peak along with other northern hardwood species. Oaks are starting to show color but could be a week or two away from their peak.

The Tioga County Service Forester reported that foliage in Tioga State Forest is still highly variable. About half of the forest is showing nice color. With temperatures forecasted to drop over the weekend, the region is expected to peak next week. The Armenia Mountain area is currently at peak conditions. To the west, a drive on Colton Road is very picturesque. In Pine Creek Gorge, the colors seem somewhat muted, with the exception of some pockets of red maple standing out in the landscape.



Lake Nessmuk (PA Fish and Boat Commission). (photo by T. Oliver)



Foresters in Moshannon State Forest stated that foliage is peaking this week. Birches and beeches are bright yellow, and red and sugar maples are vibrant red, orange, and maroon. Black gums are bright red, and understory sassafras are bright yellow and orange, providing a nice contrast with the oaks which are still mostly green.

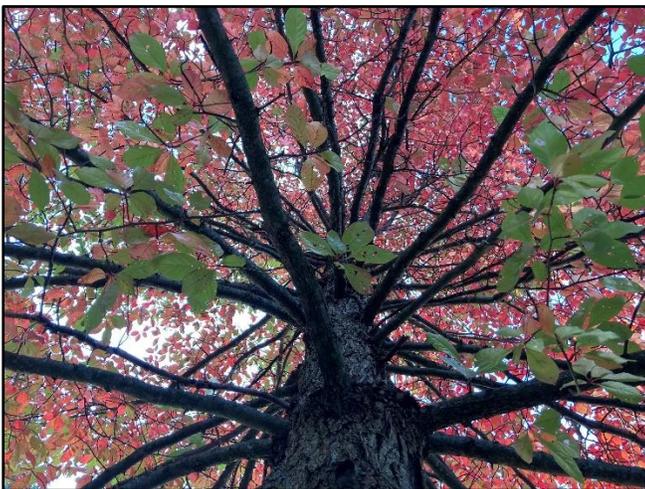
A recommended drive is a nine-mile loop from Parker Dam State Park. From the park office, take Mud Run Road east; turn right onto Tyler Road, then go right onto Laurel Run Road. Make a right onto Laurel Ridge Road back to Mud Run Road. In the Black Moshannon Division in Centre County, drive Beaver Road along Black Moshannon Lake and take Route 504 east toward Unionville along the Allegheny Front.

Forestry staff in Loyalsock State Forest indicated that the fall color transition has been unusual. The warm weather seems to be slowing the color change, and rain has stripped many leaves. Green is still a common color since oak and beech have barely started to change. These species will probably not fully change until the first week of November. Despite the inconsistency in color, great fall viewing opportunities are available. A recommended hike is on Rough Hill Trail from the Sandy Bottom parking lot, where two vistas await, offering a stunning view up and down the Loyalsock Creek Valley.

Laurel Run Road, Moshannon State Forest. (photo by Z. Miller)

West-central and Southwestern Regions

In Venango and Clarion counties (Clear Creek Forest District), maple, aspen, tulip poplar, sumac, black gum, wild grape, sassafras, black birch, and black walnut are in full color; with some areas north of U.S. Route 80 past peak. Hickories are now showing bright yellow, and the oaks are starting to change as well. Good places to see fall colors include Brady's Bend Overlook (Clarion County), Seneca Fire Tower at Cook Forest State Park, Beartown Rocks, and Kennerdell Overlook.



(L) Black gum. (R) Gray dogwood. Clarion County. (photos by H. May)

The Mercer/Lawrence County service forester reported that leaf transition has recently slowed, but pleasant color is showing on maples, elms, walnuts, birches, poplars, and aspens. Occasional oaks have added some color, and bright purple asters still adorn the roads with their beauty. This area is displaying what will likely be the best color of the season.



Fish Run, Laurel Mountain Division, Forbes State Forest. (photo by R. Mahony)

The Mt. Davis area of Forbes State Forest has peaked, but some of the color is still hanging on.

The Blue Hole area of Forbes (just north of Mt. Davis) is about to peak, with beautiful reds, oranges, and yellows. Visitors can take a drive along Blue Hole and Cole Run roads to enjoy the leaf-lined back roads and serenity of Blue Hole Creek and Cole Run Falls.

The Laurel Ridge is approaching peak fall color this week, so now is the time to head outdoors to enjoy the fleeting fall colors.

Chestnut Ridge in Fayette County is progressing nicely and will likely peak in a week.

In other counties in southwestern PA (Allegheny, Greene, and Washington) and lower elevation areas (Westmoreland, Somerset, and Fayette), the leaves are noticeably changing. However, these areas may still be very green. Warmer than average temperatures during the day and night have slowed down leaf color progression and will delay peak by a week or so.

Central and Southcentral Regions

In Weiser State Forest District, the Schuylkill/Carbon County service forester said oaks are still holding summer color, but most other species are approaching peak. The species which kicked off the color for the year will continue to shine this week. Black birch and tulip poplar will show some of the brightest yellows of the season. Black gum has shown some deep purple to orange color while red maple adds bright shades of red. Oaks in the upper elevations have just begun to show the russet and orange hues we will witness in full vividness over the next several weeks.



Forestry staff in Michaux State Forest reported slow color progress in the region. Higher elevations are the best places to view early color, currently. Ridge Road in southwestern Cumberland County is a great drive to enjoy the foliage now, as is Route 233 through a major portion of the state forest district.

The Union, Mifflin, and Snyder County service forester (Bald Eagle State Forest District) said birches and poplars are yellow, while most black gums and red maples have turned shades of red. Many oaks are starting to change, adding to the display. Forest visitors are recommended to travel to one of the many state forest vistas for a nice view.

Penn Forest Tract, Weiser State Forest. (photo by S.Ziegler)



Pleasant color surrounds a cabin in Bald Eagle State Forest. (photo by J. Portzline)

In Bald Eagle State Forest, Centre County, foresters noted moderate change in color from last week with a few more species displaying change. Sassafras, witch hazel, Black gum, and dogwood are showing orange, yellow, and red. The area is still about a week to ten days from peak.



Beautiful colors along irrigation lake at Mira Lloyd Dock Center near Potters Mills. (photo by C. Neuffer)



Fall color at Raystown Lake. (photo by J. Thompson)

The Huntingdon County service forester said that the best leaf color is “right around the corner” in Rothrock State Forest. Oaks continue to hold fast to their deep green foliage, but not for long. Birches, red maple, hickory, and many others are showing some very nice color. Unfortunately, many sugar maples, which are usually brilliant now, have lost their leaves early due to abundant moisture. Peak leaf color should be very soon, albeit about a week later this year than usual. The northern portion of Rothrock State Forest around the State College area is the best region for viewing fall color in the district, currently. A recommended scenic drive is Seeger Road to Stone Creek Road from Greenwood Furnace State Park to U.S. Route 322.

In Buchanan state forest, foliage has changed very little since last week due to the above normal temperatures. Black birches are starting to change to yellow, but the district is still weeks away from peak, which will most likely be the end of October or beginning of November. The best places to see fall color are Broad Mountain Road (Franklin County, Bear Valley Division), Tower Road in Allen’s Valley, Bark and Summit Road (Fulton County, Sideling Hill Division), and Martin Hill and Blankley roads (Bedford County, Chaneyville Division).

The Perry County service forester (Tuscarora State Forest) reported that early color can be seen on birch, tulip poplar, black gum, sumac, and maples. For the best views and picturesque scenery in Tuscarora State Forest, sightseers are advised to visit the many vistas throughout the district.



Fall color along Juniata Creek, Perry County. (photo by J. Woleslagle)

Northeastern Region

The Pike and Monroe County service forester serving Delaware State Forest reported that oak species are beginning to change into their russet colors. Red maple is at peak red and orange, and sugar maple is currently yellow. Black gum is turning a reddish-burgundy color, while sassafras is showing bright orange. Peak color is most likely going to be at the end of next week. The more northerly areas of the region are showing the most color currently, along with areas of higher elevation. The Route 402 and 209 corridors are optimal options for a scenic drive. Both areas have extensive tracts of publicly accessible land which provide opportunities to hike and get a closer look at the fall colors.



Warm fall colors along the Pocono Trail. (photo by T. Latz)

Foresters in Pinchot State Forest reported that Susquehanna and northern Wayne County forests are past peak. In northern Luzerne, Lackawanna, and Wyoming counties, maples, aspens, and birches have transitioned to peak fall color. With expected colder weather, foliage enthusiasts should not delay a trip for sightseeing. Forest visitors should target the Thornhurst Tract in Lackawanna County, the Deep Hollow Tract in Luzerne County, or Tobyhanna or Gouldsboro State parks to experience some great fall color.

Southeastern Region

Northern counties that comprise the William Penn State Forest District (Bucks, Northampton, Lehigh, Berks) are approaching peak color. Poplars and birches are displaying bright yellow, and sassafras and beech are turning shades of orange. The southern counties in the district (Lancaster, Chester, Delaware, Philadelphia) have been slow to change but are showing some signs of the season on maples, dogwoods, and black birch. Fall foliage sightseers are advised to visit French Creek and Nockamixon State parks to view some early fall color.