



Located in the Mountain Creek Valley of Cumberland County, Pine Grove Furnace is a local treasure that is of great natural and historical significance in the region. Surrounded by the Michaux State Forest, the park features the Appalachian Trail, two lakes that are used for swimming and recreation, a historic area, and there are many trails that provide access to awe inspiring views of the valley.

The park provides for a multitude of recreational opportunities which include, but are not limited to: hiking, picnicking, fishing, bicycling, hunting, camping, swimming, boating, ice skating, cross country skiing, and snowmobiling. The park holds great historical significance and the interpretive center provides exhibits, hikes, and various different demonstrations annually.

Pine Grove Furnace has a long history in the region. Before the park was opened the area was used as an iron works operation. The furnace itself was constructed in 1764 by George Stevenson. Over the next 131 years the furnace was heavily used in the production of various different iron products, such as: plated stoves, fire-place backs, iron kettles, and it is believed that it was even used to create munitions during the American Revolution. In 1895 the furnace was decommissioned and in 1913 the 17,000 acre Pine Grove Ironworks was sold to the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. This area then became what is now Michaux State Forest and Pine Grove Furnace State Park.

There are many different historic buildings that are still on their original sites such as: the ironmaster's mansion, grist mill, the paymaster's cabin, the clerks office, and the second ironmasters mansion (which is now the park office). Tours are available in the park which give further details into the history of these buildings and other historic features within the park.

Wildlife is abundant in the park, especially due to the various different eco-systems that are found within the park, which range from: open areas, wetlands, forest, lakes, and streams which provide for a great variety of flora and fauna. At the shores of Laurel lake it is not uncommon to see waterfowl such as: Canada geese, merganser, mallards, and green and great blue herons. From time to time park visitors may even encounter black bears (use caution and maintain a safe distance from bears).

There are two beaches at the park (at Fuller and Laurel Lakes) that are open from May through September. Park roads are open to bicycling along with a section of the Appalachian Trail that runs through the park. Fishing is also permitted in the lakes, and there are over 75 acres in the park that are open to hunting and trapping.

There are also many trails within the park which provide alternative scenic links to the various campgrounds, picnic areas, and lakes. The renowned Appalachian Trail runs through the park. The park is approximately 1 mile away from the halfway point of the trail and many hikers of the trail stop at the park to take the half-gallon ice cream challenge to celebrate reaching this part of the trail. It is not uncommon in the summer to have hikers stop in daily to take the challenge at the camp store.



Furnace Stack



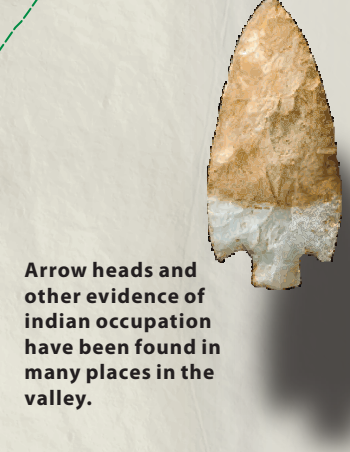
Ironmasters Mansion/A.Y.H. Hostel



Red Tail Hawk



Appalachian Trail half way marker



Arrow heads and other evidence of indian occupation have been found in many places in the valley.

Crossing the Valley
This illustration shows changes in elevation along the Appalachian Trail as it passes through the Mountain Creek Valley and Pine Grove Furnace.

