



Raccoon Run

All Levels

Welcome to Raccoon Run! Come enjoy the varying habitats at Camp Tanasi. Use your eyes, ears, nose, and mind to become a discoverer on our trail. Your walk down the trail should bring you closer to the nature all around you and help you learn and remember things about the past. The trail begins in the main camp parking lot by Lighton Lodge. Follow the white rectangles painted on the trees; these are called blazes. It will lead you to Echo Cove and then to Whippoorwill. Follow the white blazes to the old Whippoorwill unit shelter, turn right, and head to the kiosk. The trail will loop back to the barn. From the barn, walk down the gravel road and look for the sign that points you back to Main Camp. The total hiking distance is 2.25 miles round-trip. **To earn the Raccoon Run patch, you must hike the entire Raccoon Run trail.**

Trail Cautions

1. Follow the trail and stay with your friends. Make sure you stay within sight of your troop. Stay with your buddy.
2. Don't touch fuzzy vines with three leaves because it might be poison ivy!
3. "Take only pictures; leave only footprints."

On your hike, look for:

Raccoons

Raccoons are about 30 inches long. Their long fur is gray, brown, and black. Their bushy tail is 10 inches long with about six or seven rings. They weigh about 15-20 pounds. They have a dark mask of fur around their eyes. Even though they're cute, they like to hide when people come around. They eat insects, aquatic animals, and vegetables. Do raccoons really wash their food before they eat it? Their dens are in hollowed-out trees. Their front and back feet have five slender fingerlike toes.



Deer

White-tail deer can be up to 8 feet long, 4 feet tall at its shoulder, and have an 11-inch-long tail. They can weigh about 300 pounds. Its fur is reddish-chestnut, or gray and white underneath. Deer are wonderful runners and jumpers. They can run 30 mph, jump 8 feet high, and cover 30 feet in one running jump. White-tailed deer mostly eat twigs and leaves from trees and uncommon grass. They will also eat weeds, nuts, and acorns. Where do you think deer sleep? If you're quiet, you may be fortunate enough to see some live deer.



Pileated Woodpecker Holes

Pileated Woodpeckers raise their young every year in a hole in a tree. In April, the hole made by the male attracts a female for mating and raising their young. Once the brood is raised, the Pileated Woodpeckers abandon the hole and will not use it the next year. When abandoned, these holes—made similarly by all woodpeckers—provide good homes in future years for many forest songbirds. Look for Pileated Woodpecker holes while on your hike.

American Holly

The plant with the prickly leaves is called American holly. Its Latin name is *Ilex Opaca*. Depending on the time of year, you may see small white flowers and/or shiny red berries on the tree. What happens when you touch the leaves on the tree? Many different types of holly trees are grown for ornament, shade, or to be clipped into hedges. The berries of the holly tree are food for many different types of animals. You wouldn't like the taste of them though, because they're bitter. What kind of animals do you think like to eat these berries?



Stone Wall (0.64 miles and 1.42 miles)

Why did settlers use stones to build walls? The stones were chosen in the forest to make pastures for the farm animals, to keep the creeks down, and to mark property boundaries. Keep on the lookout for other stone walls along the trail.

Homesite (0.78 miles – Orange Blazed side trail on the left)

Notice the rock foundation. A family once lived in a cabin that used to be on this foundation. What kinds of farm animals might the family have owned? Where did the children go to school? How many rooms might the cabin have had? How did they heat the cabin in the winter? Where did the family go to shop? How many steps does it take you to walk all the way around the Homestead foundation?

Steps at Loyston Area (1.22 miles – Blue Blazed side trail on the right)

At some times of the year, these steps are underwater due to the changing lake levels. These steps once lead to a store. Imagine for a moment what the store might have looked like. What was sold there? Whom do you think owned it? Now stand on the top step and look out into the water. Out there underneath the water was once an active city called Loyston. The street, street signs, and some buildings are still down there. TVA flooded the city when they were making a dam in 1933. What would it be like to have to give up your house? How many people do you imagine lived in Loyston? What kind of jobs would have been most common?

Fan Clubmoss (1.32 miles)

This is a small-scale evergreen sub-shrub found on forest floors in North America, where it's native. It is part of a group of primitive, spore-producing plants, the club mosses (*Lycopodium* family). In the fall, you may see the brownish spore-bearing structures sticking up from the tips like tiny battle-clubs (thus the common name, club moss). Because of the evergreen foliage, settlers sometimes called it ground pine, creeping cedar, or running cedar, and decorated with it at Christmas. What kind of trees do the scales on these plants remind you of? (Hint: You can find many of these trees along the Raccoon Run.)



Fun on Your Hike

As you walk along the trail see if you can find some of the following items:

- A feather
- Three kinds of seeds
- Something round
- Something fuzzy
- Something sharp
- Three pieces of litter (like cans and paper). Carry this out with you and dispose of it. That way you are protecting Raccoon Run.
- Something beautiful
- A sun trap. (Something that captures the sun's heat)
- Something chewed on by an animal

Listen carefully for these sounds while you are walking back:

- A bird singing
- A squirrel chattering
- Water trickling over a rock
- A limb falling from a tree
- Leaves or trees blowing in the wind.

See if you can observe any of the following:

- A bird or squirrel's nest
- Water running
- A funny cloud shape
- A live animal
- A spider's web
- A sign of erosion