

mowing is delayed until Nov. 1 to allow state listed plants to seed. This is part of our “Roadside Mowing Policy.” This particular area has a population of Yellow-Fringed Orchids. Continue on to the intersection and turn left on Forest Road 3. Follow it for a couple miles to where Road 6 turns right. If you stop here, there are two old clearcuts on the left. One of them was cut in 1978 and the other one was cut in 1989. See if you can tell which is which.

Proceed on Forest Road 3 to State Route 125. This is the end of the Forest tour. Turn left and Rt. 125 will lead you back to Rt. 52 in about six miles. Along the way you’ll pass through **Shawnee State Park**. Feel free to stop here and take in the recreation opportunities. You can turn right on the Lodge Rd. and visit the fabulous Shawnee Park Resort Lodge, Conference Center and Cabins. On the way you’ll pass the Park office on the left. **The Park also has a Class “A” Campground with 109 sites, two beaches for swimming, hiking trails and other popular attractions. It is open year around.** The ODNR Division of Parks and Recreation manages this Park and the other State Parks.

Feel free to stop back at the Forest office for further information. You may also wish to visit our website at www.ohiodnr.com/forestry. You have barely scratched the surface of Shawnee State Forest on this tour. There are many other roads and trails to take and we hope you’ll come back soon. Try a trip in each of the four seasons and enjoy the variety.

Happy Trails !
ODNR Division of Forestry,
Shawnee State Forest.

Location Map



Additional Information

Shawnee State Forest

13291 US Highway 52
 West Portsmouth, Ohio 45663-8906
 Phone: (740) 858-6685
 Toll free: 1-877-247-8733

Shawnee State Park

4404 State Route 125
 West Portsmouth, Ohio 45663-9003
 Phone: (740) 858-6652

Shawnee State Park Resort and Conference Center

P.O. Box 189
 Friendship, Ohio 45630-0189
 Phone: (740) 858-6621

877-24STREE
ohiodnr.com/forestry



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 2045 Morse Rd., H-1 • Columbus, Ohio 43229-6693
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SHAWNEE

STATE FOREST

AUTO TOUR

Self-guided Auto Tour of Shawnee State Forest

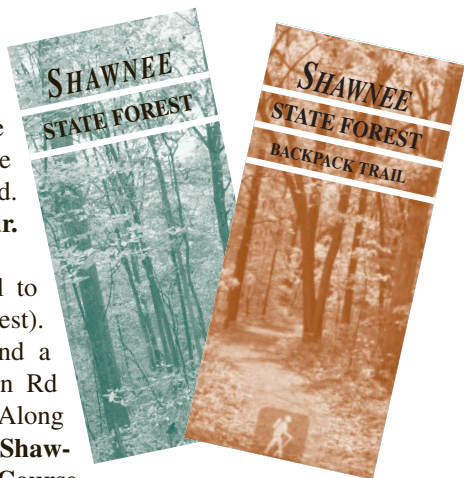
Welcome to Shawnee State Forest!

Shawnee is the largest State Forest in Ohio, encompassing over 63,000 acres, or nearly 100 square miles. Shawnee is often referred to as “The Little Smokies of Ohio.”

Questions often come up about the Forest. This tour guide is meant to help answer some of the routine, most often asked questions, as well as explaining, and most important, showing you, how Shawnee State Forest is managed.

Some areas of interest that will be covered on this tour are: History, Management, Recreation, Wildfire, Prescribed Fire, Biodiversity, Forest Health, Ice Storm in 2003.

Grab a Shawnee Forest map and a Shawnee Backpack Trail map if you'd like while you're here. They may be helpful as you proceed. **Now, let's start the tour.**



Go back down the hill to Rt. 52 and turn right (west). Proceed about three and a half miles to Pond Run Rd and turn right. (Note: Along Rt. 52 you passed the **Shawnee State Park Golf Course and Marina**. Later on we will explain what the Division of Parks and Recreation manages (which is different from the Division of Forestry.) Follow Pond Run Rd. (Township Rd. 100) about two miles to the sign that says Shawnee State Forest. This is where the Forest begins. You are now on Forest Road 1. From here this tour will guide you to a beautiful vista overlooking the Ohio River.

1 Follow Forest Road 1 a little over a mile to Forest Rd. 5. Turn left. Follow the blacktop all the way to the top of the hill where the overlook is located. This is **STOP 1**. This is a spot worth stopping to get out and enjoy the view. The Kentucky hills are in the distance. When

you're done here, continue on the blacktop road a short way where a turnaround will head you back down the hill. At the turnaround you will see a large communications tower. The tower, which was constructed in 2004, supports the ODNR radio network and other networks as well. Pond Run fire lookout tower was here until about 1985.

2 Go back down the hill to Forest Road 1 and turn left. After a mile or so you will see a kiosk on the right entitled “Resource Management.” There is room to stop and park here. This is **STOP 2**, Pheasant Hollow. The Backpack Trail crosses the road here and orange blazes mark the Trail. The Division of Forestry work crew maintains seventy miles of hiking and Backpack Trails in the Forest. (Maps of the Backpack Trail are available at the Office.) There are seven designated campsites along the Backpack Trail where overnight hikers must stay.

The kiosk at this stop explains how **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT** is done in the State Forests. You may be surprised to learn that over 20,000 acres of timber sales have taken place in Shawnee State Forest since 1948. The 240 sales include over 17,000 acres that were selectively harvested and 3200 acres that were clearcut. This ongoing program of practicing forestry and harvesting timber on a sustainable basis when the stands are ready has created a wide range of habitats. That is one reason there is such a diversity of flora and fauna in Shawnee State Forest.

As you proceed on you will pass some private property and residences. We refer to these as “inholdings.” These “inholdings” are property that hasn't been acquired. We purchase property when it becomes available and when we have the money to purchase it. We acquire it from “willing sellers.” So the owners have to be willing to sell, and then we have to agree on a price. Some people will



The Division of Forestry is part of the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR). **The Mission of ODNR is “To ensure a balance between wise use and protection of our natural resources for the benefit of all.” Just a few words, but a tremendous amount of meaning.**

Let's see where the Division of Forestry fits in this picture. As you might expect, it has a lot to do with trees and forests and forestry in Ohio. The Division of Forestry programs include a State Nursery, Urban Forestry, Forest Health, Landowner Assistance, Forest Industries, Fire Protection, and (here's where Shawnee State Forest comes in) State Forests. The Division of Forestry is legally defined in Chapter 1503 of the Ohio Revised Code. **The Mission of the Division of Forestry is “To promote and apply management for the sustainable use and protection of Ohio's private and public forest lands.”**

The Division of Forestry's roots go all the way back to 1885 with the creation of a “State Forestry Bureau.” The first land purchased for State Forests was 221 acres in 1916. Since then, the State Forest System has grown to 20 State Forests that encompass 185,000 acres.

never sell, and you can see the appeal of owning land that borders the Forest. Prior to 1922 this was all private land. Shawnee State Forest began with a 5,000-acre land acquisition in 1922. Much of the land acquired had been cut over, farmed, and or burned. Since then our land base has grown to 63,000 acres. With time, the forest grew back.

When you get to the top of the hill you will cross a gravel road, Forest Road 2. Stay on the blacktop and follow Forest Road 1 on over the hill. Along the way you will notice a few newer clearcuts on the left. These were done after **The Great Ice Storm of February, 2003**. As you continue traveling on Forest Road 1, you will come to Pond Lick Lake. This is **STOP 3**. The kiosk tells the story of The Great Ice Storm of 2003. The ice storm lasted for three days. It was so devastating that eight counties along the Ohio River Valley in Ohio received Federal Disaster Declarations. It also impacted over 20,000 acres of Shawnee State Forest. The area you are driving through now was the hardest hit.

Just below the Lake used to be a Civilian Conservation Corp (CCC) Camp. The CCC Program began in the depression area of the 1930's. It was a national program. Many of the Forest roads were built by the "CCC boys." The small lakes around the Forest were built as water supplies for the CCC Camps. The program lapsed during WWII. It was revived in 1979. The Camp below Pond Lick Lake was active from 1979 until 2004. The program lapsed in 2004, and the buildings and camp were removed. The only remnant is the log cabin from the original CCC Camp of the 1940's. This historic building is built of American Chestnut logs. American Chestnut was the major forest species in this region until a

blight wiped it out soon after the turn of the 20th century. The root systems remain, and the trees continue to sprout in Shawnee State Forest. However, before they can produce seeds, the blight strikes them again. *NOTE: In 2007, the cabin was moved to Shawnee State Park, next to their nature center.*

White Oak and Other Oak Mortality

As you drive along you will notice a lot of dead oak trees. This widespread mortality was triggered by stress from a drought in 1999. In 2000 many white oaks were defoliated by Forest Tent Caterpillars. In 2001 another round of defoliation occurred. This is when the mortality became evident. A summer drought occurred in 2002, and Common Oak Moth Caterpillars defoliated more trees. The ice storm in 2003 stressed many trees further by snapping out large portions of the trees' crowns. That stress showed up in 2004 with Scarlet Oaks and Black Oaks adding to the oak mortality. Inch worms (genus *Phigalia*) and Common Oak Moth once again fed on the tree leaves. Chestnut Borers are now common under the bark of dying trees, as well as Hypoxylon canker.

As you proceed, you will notice several fields on the left and right. These areas are mowed for hay each year. In so doing, we maintain some open field habitat that is important for many species of wildlife. Shawnee State Forest holds a bounty of flora and fauna. It is a treasure trove of many species of birds, butterflies, trees and wildflowers. People come from miles around for birding, observing wildflowers, and other forms of nature appreciation. Over a thousand species of plants and animals are found here. At least seventy-five species of trees grow here. Threatened and endangered species like Dwarf Iris, Bobcat, and Timber Rattlesnake inhabit the Forest.

Birding in the Forest is outstanding. The Annual Audubon Christmas Bird Count has been centered in the Forest since the 1920's. In April, 2004, the Ohio Ornithological Society held its first conference at Shawnee State Forest and Park. In a three-day weekend, birders recorded 156 species of birds, most of them within Shawnee Forest. Butterflies have been surveyed annually in the Forest since 1992. Seventy-one species of butterflies have been observed to date.

Shawnee Forest is a large and contiguous tract of public land. Long-term public ownership allows for long-term management and protection. Sustainable forestry allows timber harvesting while

at the same time protecting soil, water and wildlife. It also creates a matrix of habitats from early successional to mature hardwood forests. As a result, **"Shawnee State Forest represents the best of Ohio's biodiversity."** (Natural Ohio, Winter, 2001 issue.)



When you get to Route 125, turn left. Go about a mile and turn right on Forest Road 1 by Boy Scout Camp Oyo. Camp Oyo is one of the oldest Boy Scout Camps. The Camp occupies about fifty acres and borders Shawnee State Forest. It is an ideal location for a Boy Scout Camp. As you proceed up the road you will pass a few more inholdings. A little further and you will see where Hobey Hollow Bridle Trail goes off to the left. This area has historic significance as it was once part of the Roosevelt Game Preserve. Today it is one of the most popular bridle trails in the Forest.

During some of the deer and turkey hunting seasons, Hobey Hollow is open as a primitive camp for hunters. Shawnee State Forest is a Public Hunting Area. Hunting and fishing are allowed as regulated by the ODNR Division of Wildlife. The



most popular game species in the Forest are deer, wild turkey, gray squirrel, ruffed grouse, and rabbits.

Hunting seasons generally begin in September and run through February. Then spring turkey season starts late in April and runs through part of May. Check the Division of Wildlife regulations for specific seasons and bag limits.

4 At the top of the hill you meet a gravel road, Forest Road 14. Pull over on the right. This is **STOP 4**. Just ahead on the right is one of the many vistas maintained by the Division of Forestry. It is nice to get a view out across the forest. To maintain the view, the trees must be kept out of the way. That is done with the use of Prescribed Fire on a three to five year cycle.

Prescribed Fire is also used in the Forest to favor oak seedling in the understory and reduce the heavy fuel (logs and limbs) in the understory. Research has shown that fires in the landscape during the past centuries resulted in more oak trees getting established in the forests in this part of the country. After fire control measures went into effect in the 1920's, fires have been suppressed and reduced. Now we know that to maintain the important oak forests, we need to reintroduce fire to the forests. Shawnee State Forest has a ten year plan to prescribed burn about 1800 acres per year with low to moderate intensity fires from 2005 – 2015.

The District 6 staff includes a maintenance crew of six laborers and Equipment Operators. They are the ones who take care of the roads and bridges you have been driving on. They also assist with wildfire suppression in Scioto and Adams Counties, as well as with prescribed fires in the State Forest System. They have numerous other duties as well, including maintenance of over 200 miles of Forest boundary (painted yellow).

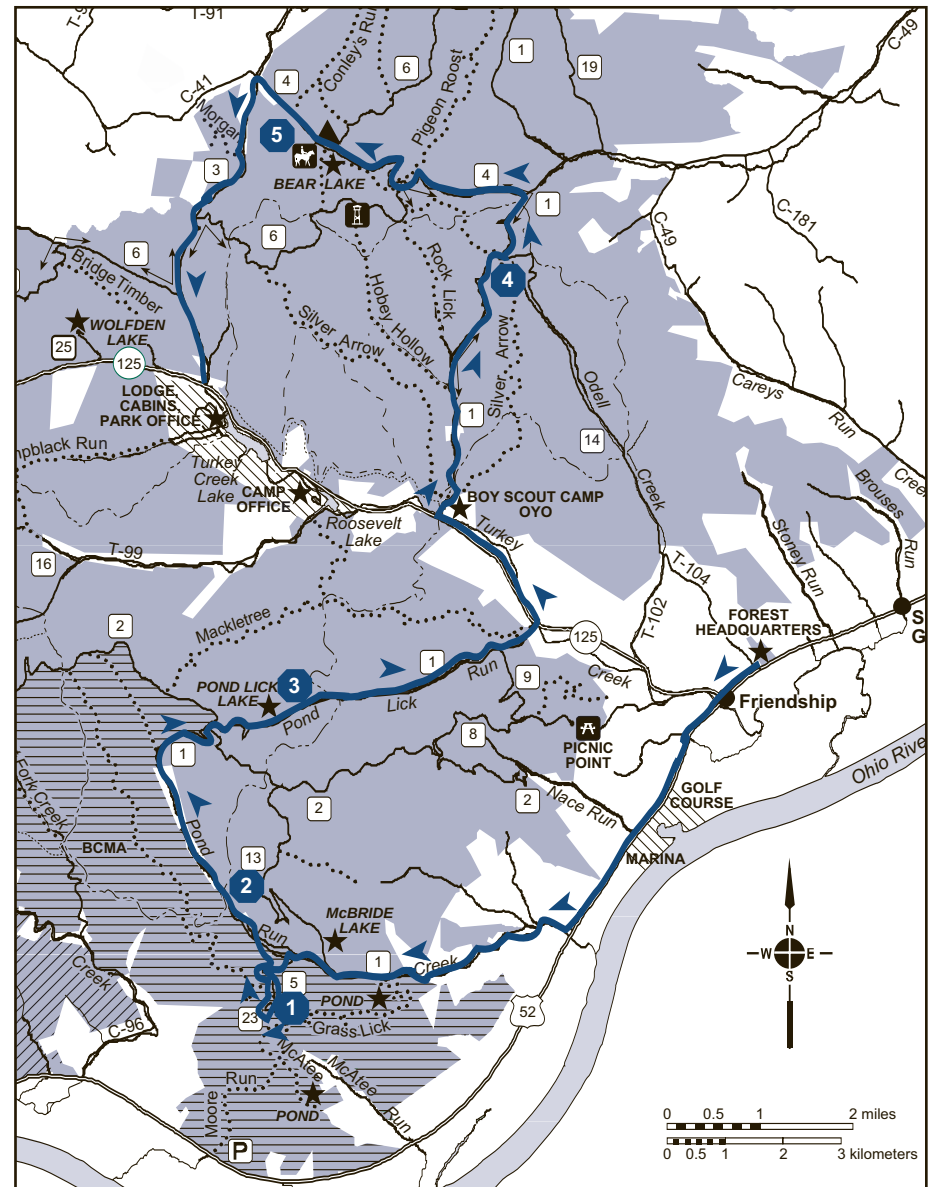
Continue on the blacktop Forest Road 1 which switches back to the left at this point. At the bottom of the hill, go a little further, and turn left on Forest

Road 4. Go to the top of the hill and follow Road 4 to the right.

Note: For a side trip, turn left on gravel Forest Road 6. About a mile ahead on the right is Copperhead Fire Tower. There is a parking area just past the fire tower on the left. Feel free to take a look at the fire tower, but **DO NOT CLIMB UP ON IT**. That is prohibited due to its unsafe condition. This was the first fire tower in Ohio, erected in 1922. (Fire towers are no longer needed to detect wildfires in Ohio, and most of them have been taken down.)

Continuing on Forest Road 4, follow it down the hill and on to Bear Lake Horse Camp. This is **STOP 5**. Feel free to stop here and look around. This primitive, sixty-site Camp is for campers with horses only. It ties in conveniently to numerous bridle trails. It is especially popular from April through October, and full on holiday weekends. The Scioto County Chapter of the Ohio Horsemen's Council volunteers maintain the bridle trails in Shawnee State Forest. They have made improvements at the Horse Camp, like the horse tie poles. They also improve the bridle trail system when possible, and maintain a parking and recreation access area on Rt. 52 called "Moore Run."

State Forest Officers provide the law enforcement necessary to protect forest visitors and the Forest. They assist the public, respond to emergencies, write



citations, investigate encroachments across the Forest boundary, and enforce state laws and forest rules. They also have authority to enter onto private property to investigate wildfires and to enforce the open burning laws.

On down Forest Road 4 past the Camp, you'll see some yellow signs that say "Vegetation Clearance Limit." They mark areas around the Forest where