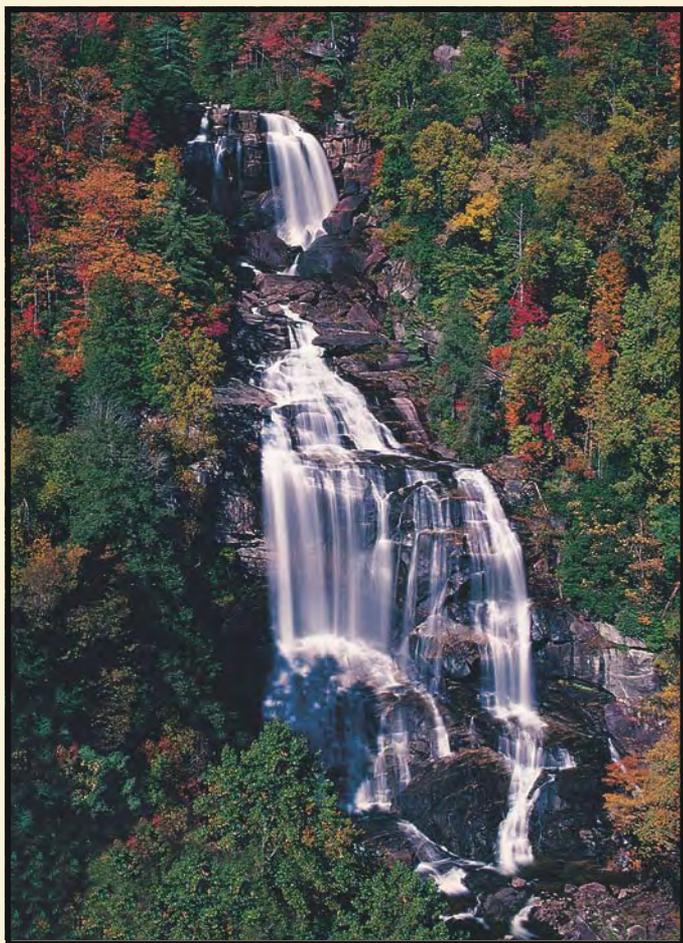


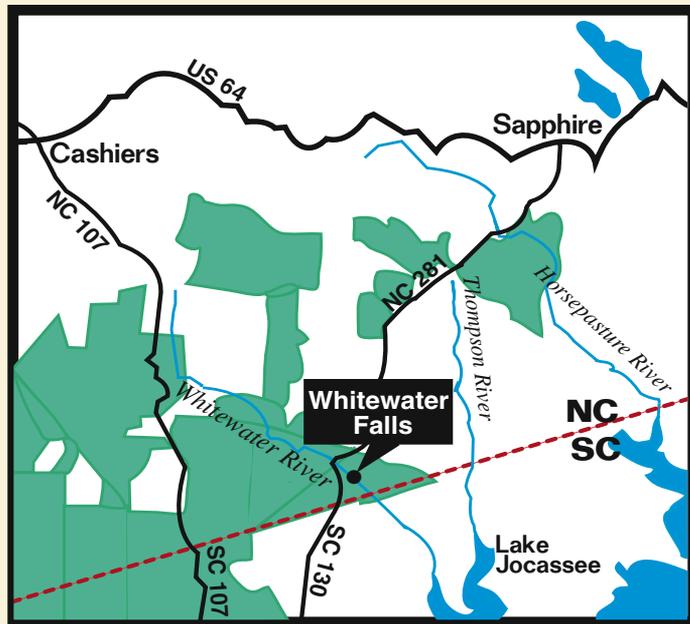
# WHITEWATER FALLS:

landmark to discover



**D**iscover the East's king of waterfalls. Watch it cascade over massive rock pillars and drop 411 feet to the river below.

USDA Forest Service  
National Forests in NC  
Nantahala National Forest



## DIRECTIONS:

**From Asheville:** Take I-26E and exit 40 (Asheville Airport). Turn right on NC 280W. After 16 miles, NC 280W becomes U.S. 64W in Brevard. Stay on U.S. 64W. Turn left on NC 281S at Sapphire, and go 9 miles. Turn left into Whitewater Falls entrance.

**From Cashiers:** Take NC 107S for 8.3 miles. Just after crossing the State line, turn left at the Whitewater Falls sign. Go 2.3 miles, and turn left on SC 130, which becomes NC 281 at the North Carolina State line. Turn right to Whitewater Falls.

**Walhalla, SC:** Take SC 28N to SC 107N. Before the State line, turn right on SC 413 (at the sign). Follow last two sentences of Cashiers directions.

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# WHITEWATER FALLS

Waterfall  
Overlook

Waterfall  
Overlook



NC 281

Foothills Trail  
Whitewater River



### LEGEND

- Paved Trail
- .-.- Foothills Trail
- Whitewater River
- Roads
- P** Parking
- Restrooms
- Picnic Tables
- Viewing Area

Foothills Trail

**P**

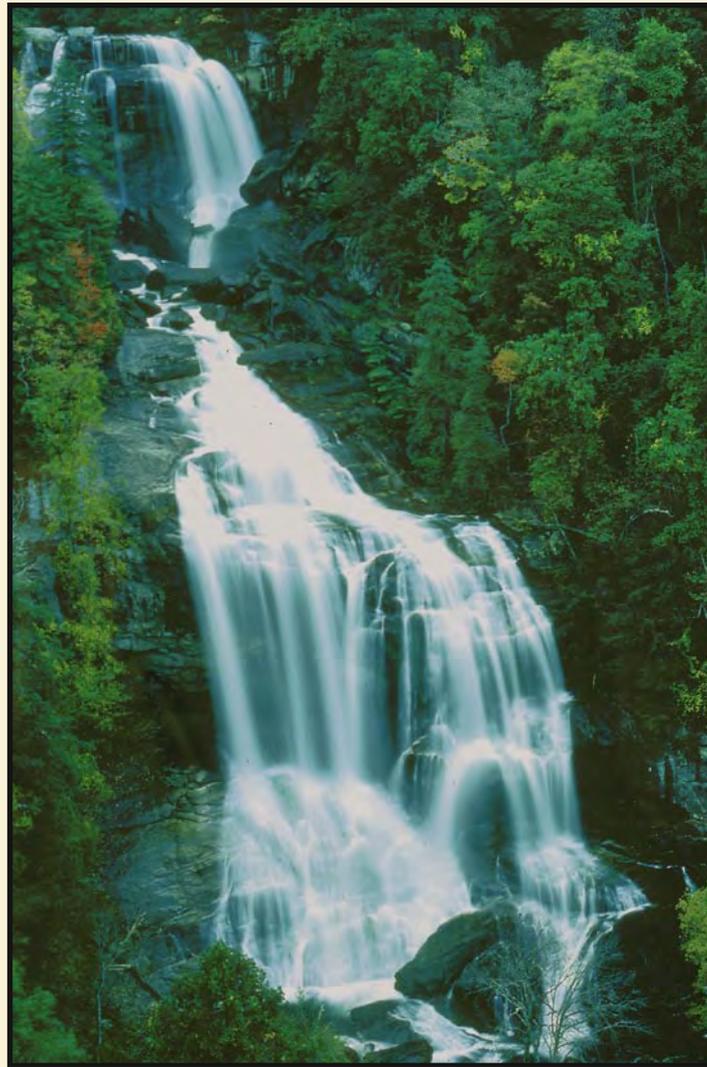
# A CASCADING BEAUTY

**W**hitewater Falls owes its existence to the Blue Ridge Escarpment, a sharp drop in elevation between the mountains and the Piedmont.

With a 411-foot plunge, Whitewater Falls in North Carolina is the highest waterfall east of the Rocky Mountains. South Carolina's Lower Whitewater Falls drops another 400 feet.

Reflecting the escarpment's steep, rugged terrain, much of the Whitewater Falls area receives few visitors and has remained wild and undeveloped over the years.

In the cool, moist shade of steep slopes and rock cliffs, wildflowers and salamanders abound. This wild land is also a perfect haven for a rich array of ferns, mosses, and fungi. Enjoy the beauty of blooms and berries throughout the seasons.



Catch a view of Whitewater Falls from two overlooks.



Catesby's Trillium



Hay-Scented Ferns



Crested Iris

## What Whitewater Falls Recreation Area offers

The Whitewater Falls Recreation Area is open from dawn until dusk year-round. The area features awesome views of Whitewater Falls and Lake Jocassee. Picnic tables and shelters, flush toilets, and ample parking are available.

Under the present fee program, up to 80 percent of the collections help fund improvements at this site. These improvements can range from trail construction to rest room renovation.

Below is a list of fees charged:

- \$2 for vehicles that carry seven passengers or less.
- \$1 per passenger for vehicles that carry more than seven people.
- For \$15, an annual pass is offered at the Nantahala District Office. Visitors may use daily parking and annual passes at Whiteside Mountain, Cliffside Lake, and Dry Falls Recreation Areas near Highlands. Prices are subject to change.



Whitewater Falls plunges over the Blue Ridge Escarpment.

## Where to find best views

For an excellent view of Whitewater Falls, follow the paved walkway to the upper overlook. The walkway begins at the end of the parking lot and is accessible to people with wheelchairs.

A lower overlook is located at the bottom of 154 wooden steps. More energetic hikers can continue down the half-mile spur trail that drops 600 feet in elevation to the Whitewater River and Foothills Trail. With the exception of the two overlooks near the top, no other views of the falls are offered.

The best views of the falls are from the two overlooks. However, some people venture off the trail to try to get better views. Tragically, several of these people have fallen to their deaths or suffered serious injuries at Whitewater Falls.

## Foothills Trail

The Foothills Trail stretches along the Blue Ridge Escarpment in North Carolina and South Carolina for 85 miles. After descending the spur trail, hikers may travel the Foothills Trail to South Carolina, Lower Whitewater Falls, and other east and west points.

Foothills Trail Conference volunteers provide the majority of trail maintenance. The conference's board includes representatives of managing agencies and landowners. The Nantahala Ranger District of the Nantahala National Forest manages a 4.5-mile segment of the Foothills Trail from the NC-SC State line east of Whitewater Falls to the NC-SC State line, west of the falls.

## Have a safe visit

To be safe, never wade or walk on rocks above the waterfall. Even when dry, the rocks are extremely slippery, and a slip can be FATAL! Viewing these waterfalls from a distance is safer and provides better views.

At the Whitewater Falls Recreation Area, the following regulations are in force for your safety and to protect the environment.

- Stay behind guard rails and caution signs.
- Stay on the trail. Avoid shortcuts, climbing on boulders, or walking on plants along the trail.
- Leave flowers and plants so others may enjoy them and so plants can generate next year's flowers.
- Picnicking is welcomed, but please place garbage in trash cans.
- Visitors may not drink or carry alcoholic beverages.
- No camping or campfires are permitted within the Whitewater Falls Recreation Area or anywhere within the Whitewater River corridor.
- Keep dogs on leashes.
- Report hazardous conditions to the host in the trailer parked across from the rest rooms or to the Nantahala Ranger District office at (828) 524-6441.

## For more info. & maps

For more information and maps, contact the Nantahala Ranger District; 90 Sloan Road; Highlands, NC 28734; (828) 524-6441. Hiking maps for the Whitewater Falls area are Nantahala and Cullasaja Trails Illustrated map and the Cashiers U.S. Geological Survey quad map. For other information, see the National Forests in North Carolina web site: [www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc](http://www.cs.unca.edu/nfsnc).