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ForestWatch Event

Big Tree Hike at Kelly Ridge
Saturday, March 2nd, 2019

February 13, 2019



A potential state champion cucumbertree magnolia dominates its cove in the Kelly Ridge Mountain Treasure. - Photo by Jess Riddle

Hike Leader: Forest Ecologist Jess Riddle

Hike Location: Kelly Ridge

Hike Date: Saturday, March 2nd, 2019

Outing Description: The Kelly Ridge Mountain Treasure is home to a wealth of rich coves with impressive forests. Passed over by the loggers of last century, a cucumber tree magnolia and a red hickory have thrived in the rich soils and reached immense proportions. We plan to measure those two trees to see if they qualify as state champions.

Starting at Dicks Creek Gap, we will follow the Appalachian Trail south about 2.5 miles and drop off the trail to see the giant cucumber tree. After hiking back up to the trail, we'll stop at the Powell Mountain overlook before following the trail another mile to Deep Gap. From there we'll take off through the woods to Dismal Creek, stopping at the red hickory along the way.

Meeting Time, Place and Directions: Meet at 10:00 am at 4797 H. F. Lyons Rd, Hiawassee, GA 30546 (Google map [here](#)). From Hiawassee, take US76 east 5 miles and turn right onto Swallow Creek Rd. Follow it 0.4 miles and turn right onto Larry Coleman Rd. After 0.2 miles, turn left onto H. F. Lyons Rd. #4797 will be on the right in 0.3 miles.

Distance and Difficulty: A strenuous six miles. Much of the hike will be off trail, and some sections are very steep and rocky. We will also gain over 1,000 feet

elevation on the trail, some of it very steep. Think of this more like a 10-mile steep hike. If you haven't hiked off trail before, this is not a good first trip.

Duration: Everyone will be back at their vehicles by 6:00pm.

Participant Limit: 10

What to Bring and Wear: Lunch, plenty of water, raincoat, and sturdy footwear. If allergic to bees/wasps, remember to bring your meds/epi-pen.

Cancellation: Hikers will be notified if the hike is canceled due to forecast of severe weather, etc.

Pet Policy: No pets, please

Family Safe Policy: Georgia ForestWatch Outings are a smoke, alcohol, and drug-free setting.

**Sign up now!
Space is limited.
Reservations are required.**

Our outings are free of charge and open to everyone on a first-come, first-served basis, up to the limit. BUT DON'T FORGET, **Georgia ForestWatch members are always given priority on our hikes** . To learn how you can become a member, [click here](#) .

To Reserve Your Spot: Please register using [this link](#) (for the best chance of securing a spot).

PLEASE READ: By registering for this event, you certify that you have read and agreed to the ForestWatch [outing waiver of liability](#) .

For more information on the hike, OR if you need directions on the day of the hike, please contact Jess Riddle at jriddle@gafw.org or 315-350-1179. Please note that the Georgia ForestWatch office is not open on the weekends, so you will need to contact Jess directly.

Upcoming Outings Mark Your Calendar & Watch for Alerts!

Saturday, March 23 - Georgia Mountain Treasures Hike (location TBD) - *with Marie Dunkle*

Saturday, April 6 - Camp Creek Wildflowers - *with Jess Riddle and SAPS*

Saturday, April 20 - Johns Mountain/Blue Springs Branch - *with Jess Riddle*

Saturday, April 27 - Ramp Cove Wildflower Hike - *with Jess Riddle*

Georgia ForestWatch outings are advertised first to members, about three weeks in advance. A few days later, if spaces are still available, a notice goes out to all who are on our alert list. We do not take reservations in advance of the email alert.



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