

Description:
 Length: 1 mile round trip
 Avg. time: 45 mins
 Trail description: moderate trail (some stairs)
 Trail Head: Large park trail map to left of visitors center, trail will continue up the ramp to first **Lovers Leap** overlook, heading up the hill taking first left on to **Tunnel Hill Trail**. At top of the hill stay right at first Y branch and then take slight left on **Tunnel Hill Trail**, continue straight on Tunnel Hill Trail to end of tree trail (#22 Paw-Paw). From here you have the option to continue straight on **Tunnel Hill Trail** and you will end up in the picnic area or you have the option to back track to the visitors center.

What you may hope to find:
 This trail is a self guided introduction to dendrology at Natural Tunnel State Park. This trail has been designed to help you identify trees as well as learn some facts about their history and uses.

- 1- **Eastern Hemlock (*Tsuga canadensis*):** This ornamental tree grows well in acid soil, cool places, out of rocks especially north facing bluffs. The bark is gray brown and smooth then turning scaly; older trees are red-brown with wide ridges and furrows; when cut or broken, purple streaks are obvious. Was once a commercial source of tannin in the production of leather. Fruit is light brown cone, 3/4 inch long with rounded, entire scales, maturing in early fall. Capable of living as long as 800yrs. Hemlock wooly adelgid is a common problem.
- 2- **American Sycamore (*Platanus occidentalis*):** One of the largest eastern hardwoods, this tree can be found along stream banks, flood plains, edges of lakes and swamps, and old field and strip mines. Note the green brown and gray patches on the bark stemming from the flakes peeling off. The wood is used for furniture parts, flooring, pulpwood, particle and fiberboard. The old hollow trunks were used by chimney swifts (birds) and occasionally as shelter for pioneers.
- 3- **Black Locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*):** This medium-sized tree often has a forking crooked and angled trunk. The white pea-shaped flowers (yellow near the base) show in dropping clusters in late spring. The beanlike seeds in dark brown oblong flat pods in fall are food for wildlife. The tree grows in dry, sandy, rocky soils in open fields and woodlands. It is mostly ornamental, but is also used for erosion control.
- 4- **Post Oak (*Quercus stellata*):** This tree grows in sandy rocky ridges and moist loamy soils of flood plains. The shape of its distinctive, leathery leaves suggest a “Maltese Cross”. The wood is used for railroad ties, post and construction timber.



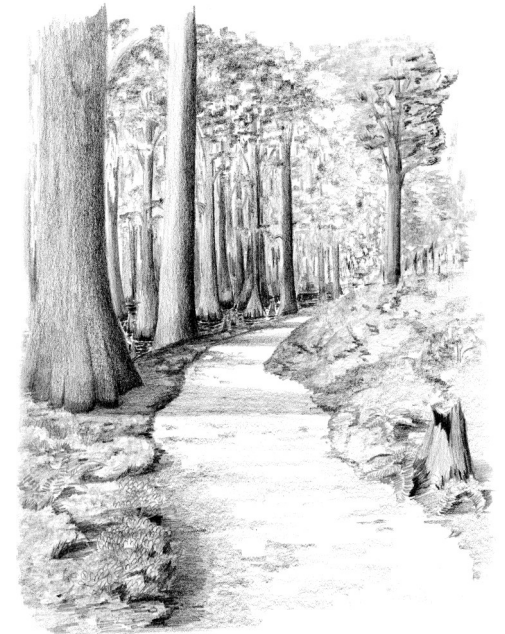
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Natural Tunnel State Park



Discover 22 Common Trees of Southwest Virginia



- 5-**Eastern Red Cedars** (*Juniperus virginiana*): Bark at the trunk is light brown or reddish brown, thin, fibrous shredded, peeling in long narrow strips: leafy twigs slender, four-angled, not having flattened fan-like appearance. Resistant to extreme temperatures and drought. The aromatic, colorful wood makes nice cedar chests, cabinets and carvings. Cedar oil from the wood and leaves is used in medicine and perfumes. Wildlife feeds on juicy blue berry-like cones. The cedar waxwing is named for this tree.
- 6-**White Oak** (*Quercus alba*): It is the classic eastern oak, with wide spreading, often horizontal branches. It grows in moist well drained uplands. The bark is white or ashy gray, scaly on smaller stems, irregularly platy or blocky on large stems. (On older trees smooth patches are not uncommon) The fruit is oblong acorn, cap is warty and bowl-shaped, covers 1/4 of the fruit; cap always detaches at maturity.
- 7-**Sugar Maple** (*Acer saccharum*): This large tree is known for its multicolored foliage in fall. It likes moist soils. The wood is used for furniture, floors, crates, and veneer. Children like the seeds for flying “Helicopters”. The Native Americans taught colonist to boil sap for “Maple Syrup”.
- 8-**Red Maple** (*Acer rubrum*): This tree shows red flowers, red fruit, and red leaf stalks. The foliage turns red, orange and yellow in autumn. The tree likes wet, moist soils, sometimes it can be found on dry ridges, and in mixed hardwood forest. The pioneers used bark extract for ink, cinnamon brown and black dye.
- 9-**Sourwood** (*Oxydendrum arboreum*): The name of this tree comes from the sour taste of the leaves. Bark is grayish brown, thick with deep furrows and scaly ridges; the ridges are often broken into rectangles. The glossy foliage turns red in fall, the flowers form in one sided clusters thus the name Lily of the Valley. It likes moist soils and uplands with oak and pines. Deer eat the twigs of this tree. Bees make honey from nectar.
- 10-**Flowering Dogwood** (*Cornus florida*): In early spring it displays beautiful yellowish green flowers, bordered by four white petal-like bracts. The red fruit and red foliage in fall add to its ornamental feature. The hardwood is used for weaving shuttles, small pulleys, mallet heads, and jeweler blocks. The Native Americans used the bark for treatment of malaria. From the roots they extracted red dye.
- 11- **Mockernut Hickory** (*Carya tomentosa*): This tree grows in moist uplands among oaks and pines. The bark is irregularly furrowed. The fine toothed, shiny, dark green leaves, (normally 7 leaflets), are lightly covered with soft hairs. They are very aromatic when crushed. The leaves turn yellow in fall. The seeds of this thick shelled rounded nut are edible. The wood is used for furniture, tool handles, baseball bats, skis, and smoking hams
- 12- **Black Tupelo “Blackgum”** (*Nyssa sylvatica*): This tree grows in moist soils of valleys and uplands in hardwood and pine forests. Tree has dense, conical or sometimes flat-topped crown, many slender, nearly horizontal branches and glossy foliage turning scarlet in autumn. It is a handsome ornamental and shade tree and also a honey plant. The fruit is berrylike, elliptical, blue-black with thin bitter or sour pulp which matures in autumn are yellowish with stamens crowded in a ball hanging on a slender hairy stalk. The female flowers are bordered by narrow hairy reddish scales. The fruit, a three cornered nut is not sweet, but edible and eaten by wildlife.
- 13-**American Beech** (*Fagus grandifolia*): Takes in rich soils, often in pure stands. It has a distinctive smooth bark, even in old age. Note the almost horizontal branches. The leaves are egg-shaped and coarsely toothed. The male flowers in spring, the nuts are irregularly triangular, shiny brown and edible, found in pairs within a woody husk covered with spines, 1/2 to 3/4 inch long, maturing in the fall.
- 14-**Tulip Poplar** (*Liriodendron tulipifera*): This is one of the tallest hardwood trees with showy cup-shaped flowers in spring (orange at base with rounded green petals). The pioneers hollowed the trunks out to make lightweight canoes. Today the wood is used for furniture, crates, toys, musical instruments, and pulpwood. Early settlers used the bark to cover roofs. Natives made carrying vessels from bark.
- 15-**Common Spice Bush** (*Lindera benzoin*): It is a very spicy and aromatic shrub. It produces yellow flowers in March through May, and red berries July through September. The twigs and leaves have been used for tea and dried berries for spice. Whitetail deer, opossum, bobwhite, ruffed grouse and even some songbirds eat the twigs or fruits. Cousin to sassafras (same botanical family). The fruit were used by pioneers to flavor meat.
- 16-**Black Walnut “American Black Walnut”** (*Juglans nigra*): Large walnut tree with open, rounded crown of dark green, aromatic foliage. Leaves: pinnately compound 9-21 leaflets. Turn yellow in autumn. Bark: dark brown furrowed into scaly ridges. One of the most coveted native hardwoods, used especially for furniture, gunstocks, and veneer. Provides edible nuts and blackish dye made from husks. Tomatoes and apples do not survive near mature trees.
- 17-**Chestnut Oak “Rock Oak”** (*Quercus prinus*): Large tree with broad, open irregular crown of chestnut like foliage. Leaves: Elliptical or obovate, turns yellow in fall. Bark: gray, becomes thick and deeply furrowed. Produces egg-shaped acorns. Because of its high tannin content, the bark formerly served for tanning leather. The wood is marketed as white oak. As a shade tree it is adapted to dry rocky soil. In the spring it is covered with masses of pink flowers. Often planted as an ornamental.
- 18-**Eastern Redbud “Judas-Tree”** (*Cercis canadensis*): Short trunk, rounded crown with spreading branches. Pink flowers cover the twigs in spring. Leaves: Heart-shaped with broad short point. Turn yellow in autumn. Bark dark gray or brown: smooth, becoming furrowed into scaly plates. Flowers: purplish-pink, pea-shaped with 5 slightly unequal petals: rarely white.
- 19-**Black Cherry “Wild Cherry”** (*Prunus serotina*): Aromatic tree with tall trunk oblong crown abundant small white flowers along a spreading or drooping axis in spring. Produces small dark red to blackish cherries slightly bitter, juicy, maturing in late summer. The largest and most important native cherry, the valuable wood is used for furniture, paneling, instruments (professional and scientific) handles and toys. Wild cherry syrup, a cough medicine, is obtained from the bark jelly and wine are prepared from the fruit.
- 20-**Green Ash** (*Fraxinus pennsylvanica*): Tree with dense inner bark, rounded or irregular crown of shiny green foliage. Leave opposite; pinnately compound; 5-9 (usually 7 leaflets). The most wide spread native ash, it extends westward almost to the Rocky Mountains. Hardy-fast growing, Green Ash is also planted on soil banks after strip mining, as well as for shade.
- 21-**Shagbark Hickory** (*Carya ovata*): The bark is smooth when young, soon becoming shaggy, then breaking loose in long strips that curl outward at ends. Leaflets are typically 5 to 7, Fruit almost round with thick husk, and 4 distinct ribs. The nut is edible.
- 22-**Paw Paw** (*Asimina triloba*): A shrub or small upright tree, the fruit is a kidney-shaped berry with yellowish green to brown skin and custard-like pulp surrounding several large flat seeds, pulp sweet and edible.

