

Outings and Events Stories

Member Memories of Past Hikes and Events

Memories are made in the National Forests: we learn, we experience beauty, we find joy with friends. This is the experience of one such event.

The White Cliffs Hike



Ken Adams and Jeff Hetsko break for lunch at the White Cliffs overlook
Photo by Michael Griffith

Recently Georgia ForestWatch members Jeff Hetsko, Michael Griffith and Ken Adams, plus GFW Executive Director Wayne Jenkins enjoyed an invigorating hike to the White Cliffs of Gilmer County. Led by Dave Cherry and his grandson "Big" Caygen, the stalwart group of males took an easy road most of the way, branching off to bushwhack up a steep grade to the top of the White Cliffs, where they enjoyed an incredible view of the Mountaintown Roadless Area.

On the way they saw Harper Creek cascading over huge smooth boulders below the White Cliffs. Exposed cliffs are a beautiful and rare occurrence across the mountains of north Georgia and the habitat on and directly adjacent included stunted hickory, shortleaf pines, sumac and blueberry species along with blooming bluets, an interesting saxifrage plus vibrant colored mosses and lichens and an unidentified goldenrod. On the return trip they traversed very steep slopes to visit two more waterfalls.

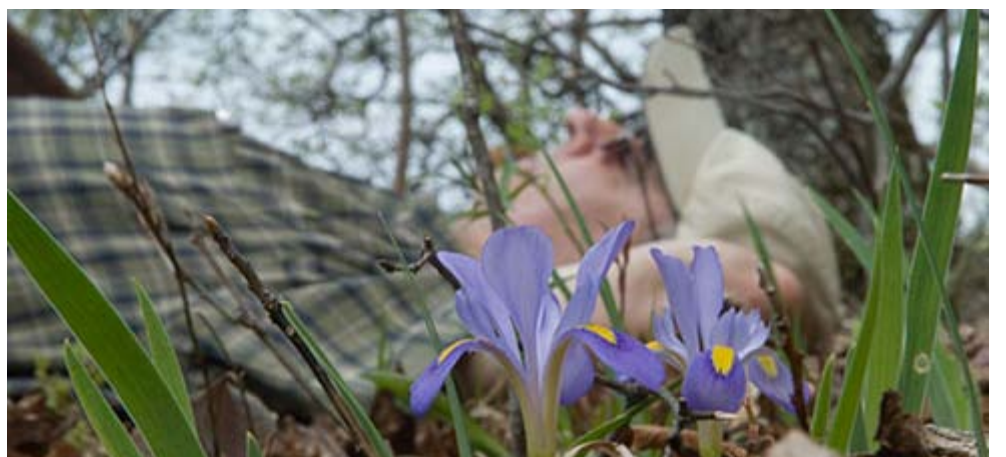


"Big" aka Caygen surveys the surrounding area at the White Cliffs overlook.
Photo by Michael Griffith



Waterfall on return from White Cliffs overlook
Photo by Michael Griffith

The hike began at the abandoned Old Harper farm dating back to 1840. Once in the forest they encountered several forest types of differing ages, most as older second growth lending the feeling of what the early settlers might have experienced when the area was first settled. They also examined an old homestead. History, ecology, views, exercise, and rest amongst the wild flowers—the hikers got it all!



Georgia ForestWatch Executive Director Wayne Jenkins takes an after lunch break among the wild iris. *Photo by Michael Griffith*



Dave Cherry, grandson and friends relax at the White Cliffs overlook
Photo by Michael Griffith

PS: Be like hike leader Dave Cherry, and take a young person with you to the woods—if not your grand child, then a niece or nephew, son or daughter, or a neighbors' child. Please share your love of our National Forests with a child. They will always remember it.

Want to give us feedback or suggestions? Call our office at 706-635-8733, or send an e-mail to info_at_gafw.org.