

Added to the Arkansas System of Natural Areas in 1978, Big Creek Natural Area is a 1,188-acre tract that encompasses between three and four miles of Big Creek, an eastern Ozark mountain stream.

Located 12 miles east of Heber Springs in Cleburne County, Big Creek Natural Area is an easy drive from Greers Ferry Lake as well as most central Arkansas cities.

Big Creek Natural Area is owned and managed by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission.

The Arkansas General Assembly created the Natural Heritage Commission in 1973. The agency's job is 1) to identify those lands and waters that retain the state's most valuable biological resources, 2) to acquire tracts of such lands for inclusion in the system of natural areas, and 3) to manage those resources for the benefit of future generations while promoting their appreciation and beneficial use.

For more information on the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, write to 1500 Tower Building, 323 Center Street, Little Rock, AR 72201; call (501) 324-9619; e-mail info@DAH.state.ar.us and check out our Web site at <http://www.heritage.state.ar.us/nhc/>



Big Creek Natural Area is part of the Arkansas System of Natural Areas.



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The Arkansas System of Natural Areas is administered by the Arkansas Natural Heritage Commission, a state agency within the Department of Arkansas Heritage.

Big Creek

NATURAL AREA

A large tract
of Ozark forest
offering
spectacular
scenery
and quiet
surroundings.



(photo by Jason Roberts)



(photo by Jerry Roberts)

Big Creek Natural Area

embraces a long, winding stretch of Big Creek, a major tributary of the Little Red River. The natural area includes approximately three and a half miles of Big Creek and the various natural communities associated with it. Water quality is high, and a diverse variety of fish and other aquatic life inhabit the creek.

In places, rocky streamside bluffs rise as high as 200 feet above the creek, creating dramatic scenery and contributing quietness and solitude for visitors.

Within the natural area itself, bluffs and uplands, a floodplain, and old creek beds support a variety of plant and animal life. You will find a number of uncommon or rare plants, many of which prefer the cool, moist and heavily shaded areas within the natural area.

While access to the creek is limited, it is possible to enjoy Big Creek Natural Area in a small boat, with adequate advance planning. Visitors can hike a fairly rugged trail either in two separate loops or as one trail of 2.4 miles.

Besides hiking, boating and nature study, hunting and fishing are permitted. Hunting schedules, licenses, and regulations are available from the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.



Adiantum pedatum
(Maidenhair Fern)
(photo by Jerry Roberts)

When visiting this or any other Arkansas Natural Area, please remember to leave nothing but footprints and take nothing but photographs, with the exception of legally taken game and fish. Please limit travel

within natural areas to foot traffic only. Motorized vehicles, horses, camping and construction of permanent hunting stands are prohibited in Arkansas Natural Areas.



Rhododendron prinophyllum
(Wild Pink Azalea)
(photo by Jerry Roberts)