

= Vogel State Park =

Vogel State Park is a 233 @-@ acre (0 @.@ 94 km²) or 94 hectares state park located at the base of Blood Mountain in the Chattahoochee National Forest . It became one of the first two parks in Georgia when it founded a state park system in 1931 . Much of the park was constructed by the Civilian Conservation Corps during the 1930s .

The park features streams , a waterfall , and Lake Trahlyta . At 2 @,@ 500 feet (760 m) elevation it is one of Georgia 's highest altitude state parks . The mountainous habitats surrounding the lake support a wide assortment of plants and animals .

Within the park are a series of hiking trails . These include the Bear Hair Gap Trail and the more strenuous Coosa Backcountry Trail , which leads up toward Blood Mountain and the Appalachian Trail near Neal 's Gap . Vogel Park features camping sites , cabins , swimming , boating and other recreational activities .

= = Description and history = =

Vogel State Park is located 11 miles (18 km) south of Blairsville on US Highway 19 in the north Georgia mountains . At nearly 2 @,@ 500 feet (760 m) altitude , Vogel State Park is usually cool during the summer months , and is one of Georgia 's most popular state parks . Vogel features hiking trails , cabins and a 20 @-@ acre (81 @,@ 000 m²) pond known as Lake Trahlyta , which was created when the Civilian Conservation Corps dammed Wolf Creek . The lake is named for Trahlyta , a Cherokee maiden who is buried a few miles from the park at Stonepile Gap . The Corps workers , located at the CCC Camp at Goose Creek just north of the park , also built the first cabins , picnic areas and camping grounds at Vogel .

Vogel is Georgia 's second oldest state park . The land comprising the park was donated to the state in 1927 by August H. Vogel and Fred Vogel , Jr. of Milwaukee , Wisconsin . The two were heirs to the Pfister & Vogel Leather Company , a Wisconsin tannery founded by Frederick Vogel . The Vogel family harvested bark from oak and hemlock trees located on thousands of acres they owned in North Georgia . The bark was shipped to Wisconsin and used by the company for tanning leather . During World War I , a synthetic method to tan leather was developed so there was no further need for the north Georgia resources . The Vogels gave their land to Georgia to create the state park .

Vogel State Park Lake Dam , also known as Lake Trahlyta Dam , is a 52 @-@ foot (16 m) high earthen embankment . The 600 @-@ foot (180 m) long dam has a maximum discharge of 2 @,@ 447 cubic feet (69 @.@ 3 m³) per second . Its capacity is 522 acre feet (644 @,@ 000 m³) , although its normal storage is 210 acre feet (260 @,@ 000 m³) . It drains an area of 1 @,@ 638 acres (663 ha) .

= = Facilities and activities = =

Vogel State Park hosts a variety of outdoor activities , including camping , hiking , backpacking , boating , fishing and swimming . The park includes 103 tent , trailer and RV sites for camping , 18 walk @-@ in campsites , and 35 cottages . About 95 of the camping sites contain electrical hookups and water . Also on site are four picnic shelters and a group camping facility , a pioneer campground , backwoods primitive campground areas and hot showers .

The centerpiece of the park is Lake Trahlyta . The lake has a swimming beach and boat launch for non @-@ motorized watercraft , and offers seasonal rentals for pedal boats , kayaks , and paddle boards . It contains bass and bream and is stocked periodically during each trout season with about 5 @,@ 000 trout . Also at the park are a general store , miniature golf course and a Civilian Conservation Corps museum .

= = = Hiking = = =

The park features four hiking trails , covering a wide variety of conditions , forest habitats and

difficulties . These include the moderate difficulty 4 @-@ mile (6 @.@ 4 km) -long Bear Hair Gap Trail marked by green blazes . It begins and ends in Vogel , although most of the trail loops through the Chattahoochee National Forest . The park also features a 1 @-@ mile (1 @.@ 6 km) Trahlyta Lake Loop Trail and the Byron Herbert Reese Nature Trail (.8 miles) .

Also in the park is the Coosa Backcountry Trail , a strenuous 12 @.@ 5 @-@ mile (20 @.@ 1 km) loop which climbs Coosa Bald and Slaughter Mountain . The trail is marked with green blazes and is generally easy to follow . It fords streams on its lower segments before ascending Duncan 's Ridge near the summit of Coosa Bald at over 4 @,@ 000 feet (1 @,@ 200 m) elevation , where it joins the Duncan Ridge Trail . The joined trail then makes a descent , then climbs slightly to the summit of Wildcat Knob , then descends to Wolfpen Gap where it crosses State Route 180 . Across Wolfpen Gap , the trail makes a steep ascent up Slaughter Mountain , then descends to Slaughter Gap where the Coosa Backcountry and Duncan Ridge Trail split . From this point , the Duncan Ridge Trail leads directly to Blood Mountain where it meets the Appalachian Trail . The Coosa Backcountry Trail makes a steep 2 @,@ 000 feet (610 m) descent down the mountain and joins with the Bear Hair Gap Trail , leading back to the point of origin . The Appalachian Trail can also be accessed from nearby Neel 's Gap , just a little higher up Blood Mountain on Highway 19 / 129 ; hikers can reach this area from the Byron Herbert Reece Trail .

= = = Annual events = = =

Annual events held at the park include a springtime Wildflower Walk , CCC Reunion , Kids Fishing Rodeo , Independence Day flag @-@ raising ceremony and bicycle parade , Mountain Music and Arts & Craft Festival held in September , Fall Hoedown , Duncan Ridge Trail 50K / 30K Race and Christmas Tree Lighting .

= = Wildlife , flora and geology = =

Like the rest of the southern Blue Ridge Mountains , Vogel State Park and the surrounding area consists of many valleys , ridges and mountains formed by repeated plate tectonic movement and collisions , starting with the Grenville Orogeny nearly 1 @.@ 5 billion years ago . The resulting landscape created diverse topology containing many different species of plants and animal .

The Georgia Blue Ridge Mountains contains low @-@ to @-@ high @-@ grade metamorphic rocks . Many of the rocks of the Blue Ridge appear to be the metamorphosed equivalents of Proterozoic and Paleozoic sedimentary rocks . Others are metamorphosed igneous rocks , including Corbin metagranite , Fort Mountain gneiss , varieties of mafic and ultramafic rocks , and the metavolcanic rocks of the Gold Belt .

Much of the area resembles Pennsylvania in climate , vegetation and wildlife . The park is near the southern limit for eastern hemlock and eastern white pine . Coves in the area vary by elevation and topography , with second @-@ growth oak and hickory more common in lower @-@ lying areas . The surrounding forests contain rich , high @-@ altitude flora including rare wildflowers and ferns , such as Persistent Trillium , which grows near Rhododendron . Nearby boulderfields by Blood Mountain include Dutchman 's breeches , squirrel corn , waterleaf and other herbaceous plants .

The area is populated with white @-@ tailed deer , grouse and raccoon . The deer population , which was extirpated by 1895 , has rebounded since re @-@ introduction by park ranger Arthur Woody during the 1930s . Over 100 species of birds inhabit or migrate through the area , including native songbirds such as the Canada warbler , Blackburnian , black @-@ throated blue , black @-@ throated green and chestnut @-@ sided warblers . Also found are hawks , owls , woodpeckers , kinglets , thrushes , vireos , cuckoos , phoebes , chickadees , titmice , nuthatches , brown creepers , wrens , tanagers , grosbeaks , indigo buntings and red crossbills . Migratory species are present during the late spring and early fall , making the area popular among birdwatchers The creeks surrounding the lake are rich with species of salamanders .

= = Vogel Museum = =

The park 's Vogel Museum features exhibits , documents , photographs and memorabilia about the activities of the Civilian Conservation Corps in Vogel State Park and other parks in Georgia .